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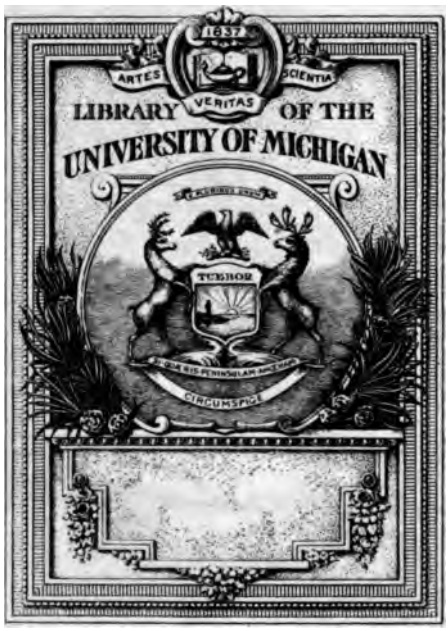
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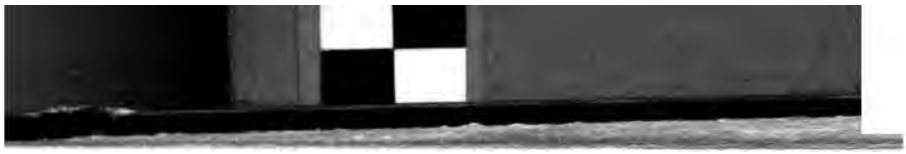
REALITIES AND IDEALS



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REALITIES AND IDEALS

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, LITERARY AND ARTISTIC

BY

FREDERIC HARRISON

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1908



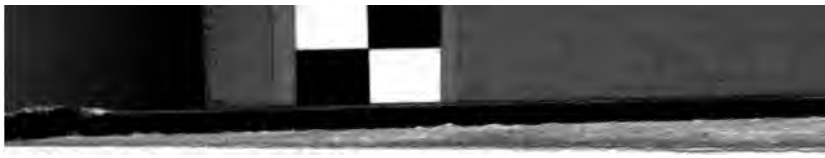
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TO

E. B. H.



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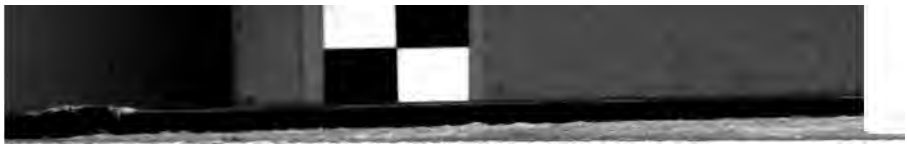
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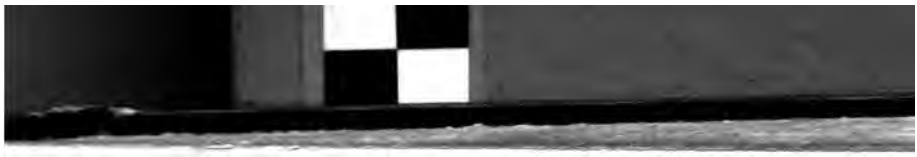
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PREFACE

THIS volume is the fourth of a series of Essays published in the present and the preceding year :—

The Creed of a Layman, 1907,
The Philosophy of Common Sense, 1907,
National and Social Problems, 1908,
Realities and Ideals, 1908.

The collected series treats of Religion, Philosophy, Politics, Economics, Literature, and Art. Diverse as are the subjects, and varied as is the form, of these studies, they are all based on one coherent scheme of thought—the Positivist Synthesis—a reorganisation of life, at once intellectual, moral, and social, by faith in our common Humanity.

The forty-four Essays have been composed at various times over more than forty years; yet, I trust, they will be found to be not only consistent but mutually to explain and complete each other. Some appeared in early numbers of English or American Reviews: some were written in the present year: a few were printed privately or were known only to colleagues and friends. The whole are more or less

biographic; and are personal reminiscences of men whom I have known, of movements in which I have had a share, or of events which I have witnessed.

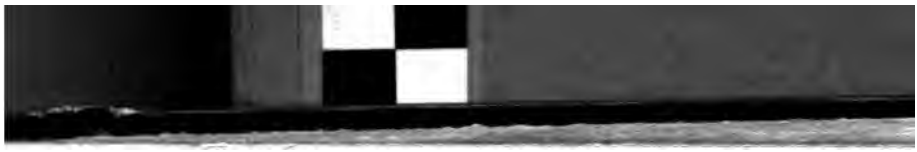
The first and principal Essay on "England and France" is an extract from a joint volume on *International Policy*, first published in 1866 and since reissued. It embodies the writer's mature belief in a systematic co-operation between our two nations as the key of peace and progress in Europe. That which half a century ago was but a distant *Ideal* to me and to my friends, I have lived to see as a *Reality*—accepted, effective, and permanent.

Three Essays on the burning questions of the Rights, Duties, and Claims of Women have not previously appeared in print. The fifth Essay, on "Votes for Women," has been written in view of the present agitation, which I regard as charged with tremendous consequences, political, social, and moral.

Twenty of these papers were published in the small *Positivist Review* (Watts & Co., 3d.), in which I have continued to write, almost month by month, since its foundation in January 1893. These Essays deal with current topics, political, social, and literary; the subjects are of perennial interest, and time has by no means led me to modify the principles on which they were based.

A few papers appeared in the Press or were addressed to public associations.

I have to thank the *Fortnightly Review*, the *Nineteenth Century*, the *Cornhill Magazine*, and the *Forum* of New York for courteous permission to include in



this volume articles contributed on various occasions within the last twenty years.

The twenty papers in Part II. on Literature, Art, Drama, and Education arose out of various incidents or discussions of the day; and I trust that no too punctilious reader will pronounce them to be beneath the attention of a serious moralist:—

ridentem dicere verum
quid vetat?

The general theory of life on which all that I have ever written is grounded, assumes that every form of culture and everything that tends to brighten our existence should contribute in its place to the sum of human happiness:—

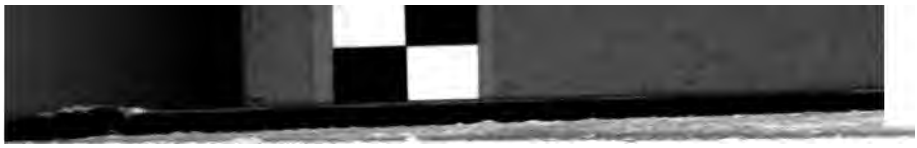
humani nihil a me alienum.

HAWKHURST, *August* 1908.



PART I

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL



I

ENGLAND AND FRANCE

(From *International Policy*, 1866)

I

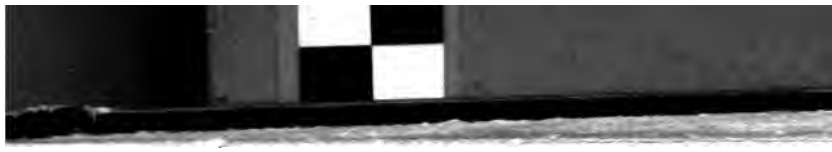
SINCE the close of the Revolutionary war, the pivot upon which the politics of Europe have hinged will be found in the relations of England with France. For fifty years this fact has been gaining in importance and distinctness. It has now, both here and abroad, modified the thoughts of writers, politicians, and the public. The events of each succeeding decade show with new force, that in union between the two great heads of the West lies the true protection to Europe against attack from without, against war from within; its best guarantee for freedom, peace, and progress. Notorious disunion between the two Powers has uniformly been the signal to Europe for intrigue, oppression, embroilment, and war. Order and progress generally have gained or lost just as this union has been intimate or weak. It may be said that, if this last half-century has been to Europe a period of almost unexampled prosperity and repose, it is because the first condition of both—union between

the heads of Western civilisation—has never been so nearly realised before.

This union, however, has been at best but imperfect and precarious. It has not rested on political doctrine or general conviction. Yet, rudely shaken as it has been, it has sufficed to protect us from actual war, and, indeed, from any serious or protracted rupture. We may trust that each year of well-used peace makes war between England and France more and more improbable. It is yet, however, far from impossible (written in 1864). That it should be so, much remains to be accomplished in both countries. In both there must arise very different conceptions of the duties, the rights, and the true interests of nations; a new sense of responsibility in public men and teachers; a conviction here and in Europe that such a war would be the greatest of all European calamities; a belief that it would retard our progress for the life, at least, of a generation.

A feeling between the two great neighbours, sufficiently friendly to preserve them from collision, has thus gradually grown stronger. It has not yet become strong enough to remove the constant recurrence of quarrels, fanned from time to time by the craft or the folly of politicians and journalists in both countries. Nor has this feeling succeeded in staying that ceaseless undercurrent of jealousy, misunderstanding, and antagonism that crosses the main tide of goodwill which sets from shore to shore. Indefinite, unstable, and without root, the harmony between England and France has been an instinct, and not a principle. If it has preserved us from great evils, it has not been able to achieve any grand success. It has sufficed for the calm; it will not bear the trial of the storm (1864).

It is the purpose of this Essay to inquire into the



mode by which this union might be grounded on a permanent and solid base; to ask what must be the conditions, what would be the results, of a standing and definite alliance. The great European importance of any such union of England and France is this, that in an especial manner these two Powers represent, if they do not guide, the grand movements of our actual state system. Whatever the intellectual and moral gifts of other races in Europe, for the time these two nations are the great political forces of the West. They are essentially co-ordinate, though not antagonistic. England represents tradition, stability, personal liberty, law, industrialism, and national independence. France represents the Revolution and its principles; the amalgamation of classes; the reorganisation of the social and the political system; the resettlement of the general state system; the rights of nationalities; government at once popular in its origin and in its aims; rule in the interests of the many and not of the few. Each Power singly is constantly tempted to force its phase of progress extravagantly and exclusively — the influence of England from time to time being degraded to the level of commercial rapacity, industrial greed, and stolid conservatism; the influence of France to that of military ambition, revolutionary disorder, or tyranny veiled under the name of public welfare.

Now these two Powers, the natural complement of each other, can never combine their influence in any lasting or grand object, except for the general advantage of Europe.[1] Combined, they strengthen the good tendencies of each other, and equally neutralise the evil. Opposed, they neutralise the

[1] This must be understood of the action of these Powers in Europe alone. Beyond its limits, and free from the restraints of their position towards our Continent, they occasionally combine in a joint oppression.

good and exaggerate the evil. The jealousies which each arouses, when acting with vigour by itself, are calmed when that action is jointly pursued by both. The policy of France, when heartily in unison with England, can awaken no reasonable terrors amongst her neighbours. Backed by the champion in Europe of peace, order, personal and national liberty, France can promote her principles without her designs seeming charged with disorder and ambition. Actively supported by France, England appeals to the nations of Europe with a moral force which has no modern equivalent. With her Catholic democratic and military neighbour at her right hand, she stands up amongst the nations as the symbol of something more than selfish conservatism; she shakes off that dull dogmatism which has so often nullified her action and swung her round against her will to the party of blind resistance. England and France — the Teutonic Protestant parliamentary and industrial power side by side with the Latin Catholic revolutionary and dictatorial power — represent together principles so various, and comprise the dominant forces so nearly, that in any policy in which they cordially agree no element of life is likely to be sacrificed, whilst all are certain to be harmonised.

No sooner, however, are the two representative Powers estranged, than the principles which they embody fall back, not so much into independent action, as into inevitable collision. In the former case they were kept in something like joint action, however imperfectly consolidated; in the latter they neutralise each other without any useful result. Divided, each seeks to maintain or promote its special lines of influence. Each, in the diplomatic language of the day, seeks for new allies, and forms alliances which of necessity are at once precarious and un-



natural. Neither England nor France can find in Europe any equal and natural alliance except with each other. This broken, any other alliance is a fresh source of insecurity both to them and to Europe.

As the separation of the two natural allies grows plainer, each more obstinately pursues its special tendencies and its national ambitions in schemes which forebode danger to Europe, and infallibly arouse the suspicions of the other. France agitates her neighbours with crude visions of a resettlement of the state system, partly revolutionary, partly autocratic; now she parades her Catholicism, now her military prestige, now her democratic zeal; now she is the chief of the Latin race, now the military arbiter of the West, now the apostle of the Revolution. England on her side at these moments assumes a part even more odious and hardly less pernicious. She prides herself on reducing everything to dead-lock; she professes a policy of inaction, negative, repressive, and critical; she constitutes herself the grand obstructive; her diplomacy is one long *non possumus*; she insists on every claim of mere legality, and suppresses every claim of moral right; she bolsters up every abuse and every retrograde and rotten system; she sinks into the blindest and most dogged conservatism, and withdraws in a sort of sulky despair from the councils of Europe, to fling herself into the task of founding new empires in distant oceans, and plundering and trampling on races of a darker skin. Other interests in Europe she is content to abandon, satisfying herself with barren protests, with checkmating every movement for good or for bad, with forming cabals against France to prevent her from abusing the season of confusion and dead-lock which the indifference of England herself has produced (1866).

These are the seasons which the elements of reaction

in Europe welcome as their special time of harvest. Under the shelter which England then affords to pure conservatism, the princes and the princelets of Germany grow bolder in their career of absolutism. Under the shelter of the Catholicity which France at such moments finds it convenient to parade, the Pope consolidates his feeble tyranny. Russia, whose place is beyond the pale of European politics proper, forms monstrous bonds of alliance, first with one, then with another, Power; and safe behind the mask of an external civilisation, she steals another footstep nearer to the Danube or the Dardanelles. The same is true wherever a weaker oppressor is watching for his time of spoliation. Never does he strike the blow until assured that England and France are on too bad terms to repress him. Nor is such a season less favourable to intrigue than it is to violence. It is the signal for a grand campaign of continental cabals.

In the recent history of Europe nearly every disaster which the cause of freedom and progress has suffered has been caused during a season of estrangement, and largely by reason of estrangement, between the two great Powers. Attacks upon Turkey by Russia demanded as their first condition that England and France should be supposed unable to combine. The Crimean War would not have been commenced unless Nicholas, in his short-sighted disdain for Napoleon, had thought it impossible for English statesmen to ally themselves with him. The successive partitions of Poland have been effected only under a similar conviction. The petty spoliation of Denmark was effected only when Napoleon had been ostentatiously rebuffed in his overtures towards a Polish intervention. Austria triumphed over Hungary and Italy in 1848 in great measure because she knew that the English and the French Governments were quite incapable of



co-operation. Had England, even by her moral weight, accepted the demands of France to aid in freeing Italy from Austria, she might with some effect have prevented the tyrannical restoration of the Pope by French bayonets. Nor would Austria have ventured to cross the Ticino in 1859 if the close alliance of the Crimean War had continued between the heads of the West. The diplomatic history of nearly every one of the catastrophes of freedom in recent times is a story of persistent and wily efforts of the oppressor to divide the policy of two great Powers, or to profit by their divisions; and of efforts no less persistent by the oppressed to bring these Powers into concert, or at least into the semblance of outward agreement.

By arguments negative and positive, by analogy as well as by example, it can be shown that harmony between the two great Powers is essential to the well-being of Europe. But has this harmony as yet any permanent basis? Have the various causes which have contributed to a long peace such solid foundation in principle as to render peace a certainty? Has not mutual respect and a general conviction of joint interest been at the highest the sole ground of union? Has anything like active co-operation been secured excepting from causes at once superficial and shifting?

The cordiality between the two Governments, which from time to time the journals of both countries announce with fulsome protestations, is generally the result of little more than a party manœuvre, the commonplace of a feeble ministry, or the device of an intriguing politician. How often within thirty years has the clique which is called the Whig party blustered and fawned before the Government of France! How often has the ministry of England found it useful to flatter or to affront the Emperor Napoleon! How

often has an *entente cordiale*, heralded by so much cheap eloquence, been broken in the very year which saw its rise — to be revived next year to serve a parliamentary division! Cabinet intrigues, demonstrations from the Press, compliments and feasts in palaces, exert no useful influence on the politics of two great races, and do nothing to cement a union between them. A true union must be made by the nations, not by ministries; it must be based on principles, not protestations; it must start from a common programme of action, in which the entire nation can feel pride, and which the entire nation in both countries understands.

Sometimes, instead of being the device of a politician, a temporary alliance between the two countries has arisen from express or tacit agreement to permit to each some cherished object of ambition. Such occasions must always be of small importance, and are hardly possible at all in Europe. But in any case such a union is necessarily precarious. Real union implies, not a compromise on special matters, but a thorough understanding on the general course of European politics. If any of the greater questions are left out, they will constantly recur to trouble the superficial agreement. But a real unity of purpose on all the questions at issue will be a union too comprehensive to be affected by personal intrigues, too moderate and mature to give anything but confidence to their neighbours.

If it is prudent to inquire on what grounds the harmony of England with France is ordinarily placed, it is disheartening to learn how slight in reality these are. Commercial interest is usually the sole, and certainly is the main, bond of union to which statesmen and writers commonly appeal. Seldom do we hear from one school or the other any principle of

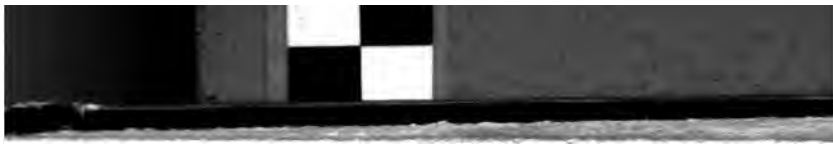


policy which rises above the sensible but obvious advice that two neighbouring nations, each with so large a trade, will probably increase it by remaining on good terms. Nothing more is required, we are assured, for harmony and prosperity in nations whom nature has designed for mutual customers but unlimited free trade and general extension of their markets. Vaguely and mechanically from the lips of aristocratic statesmen, dogmatically and passionately from those of the popular school, this is proclaimed as the sum and substance of European politics. There can be no clearer proof of the feebleness of the current political doctrines. Commonplaces of this kind can stand no serious test, much less can they produce any solid progress in opinion. Thus to exaggerate the importance of their commercial interests and duties is to do dishonour to both countries at once. It would not have been heard of except at a time when economic ideas have supplanted true political principles.

Nor is this teaching less futile than immoral. France in particular, for reasons—some honourable, some dishonourable, to her national character,—can act, and frequently does act, in open disregard to her material interests. Both England and France are continually moved by currents of feeling, in which all thoughts of the market are swept away like straws. In both countries civilisation has a far wider significance than this; and the policy of neither country is invariably in the hands of the shopkeepers. Each nation is ready to make efforts and sacrifices for very different ends. Hence Cobden's Commercial Treaty has been, in a moral and national sense, ridiculously overvalued. It is a useful measure, and in spite of the free-trade purists, a sensible measure, which does honour to the conscientious economist who achieved it and the adroit financier who made it popular. On

both sides of the Channel, besides making several towns or classes richer (which is its principal result), it has done something towards promoting more friendly language, and perhaps more sincere goodwill. But since the policy both of England and France is ultimately directed by the nation, and not by the class which principally benefits by an improvement in trade, an alliance which is based on commercial interest may at any moment be shattered by those deeper currents which fill the nation with a strong purpose; in fact, an alliance between two great nations so situated, which was based entirely on trade, would scarcely last many months. Assuredly it would not enable the two Powers to do much for the peace and prosperity of Europe.

Such are the grounds on which union with France is usually based. It is obvious that none of these can render it lasting. That which has now for so many years, and through trials so severe, really maintained the good harmony between them has been the conviction, common to all but a few in both countries, that the great ends necessary for the welfare of France are, in the main, those necessary for the welfare of England. Here the dregs of the old aristocratic, there of the old military, fanatics nurse the malignant hatred of the great war; but in this generation, for responsible beings in both countries, the old religious duty of rivalry and antipathy is as completely extinct as the morbid passion of national hate which dishonoured the fine nature even of Nelson. Frenchmen are not reared, like boy Hannibals, to dream of a tremendous vengeance; and patrician bigots no longer clamour in our Senate for the extinction of a rival Carthage. But it is obvious that, as a fixed ground of national policy, the vague sense of common interests between the two countries needs to be placed



on a basis far more systematic and definite. The policy of two nations such as England and France, acknowledged as the heads of civilisation in Europe, must of necessity embrace great European objects, must take some attitude towards the principal movements of the Continent, and satisfy the conscience and the honour of two generous races.

Ends such as these can hardly be effected by commercial treaties, by free trade, or by large increases in consumption. The most confirmed intention of buying only in the cheapest and selling only in the dearest market is liable to be deranged by very singular perturbations. Nothing, in fact, can rise to the dignity of a national policy but a broad, wise, and comprehensive estimate of the true situation of modern Europe. Neither country would be assuming its natural position unless it is prepared to face resolutely the conditions in which it stands, and to assume responsibilities called forth by each occasion. Nor will such a policy be of any permanent use, unless it is thoroughly in harmony with the history and traditions of both people; unless it is felt to be the true destiny pointed out by centuries of national life; unless it can take hold at once of the higher minds of the nation and the instincts and sympathies of the mass of the people.

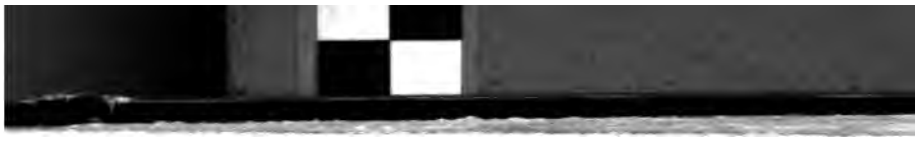
Any harmony between England and France that professes to be based on anything short of a principle such as this can be nothing but a mockery or a phrase. Each nation must have, and will have, its national policy more or less systematic, more or less comprehensive. And it follows with complete certainty that, unless the policy of each tends in the main towards the same end, they will sooner or later result in a conflict. It is the tendency of such a conflict, even where it stops short of overt hostility, to produce

a minimum of good and a maximum of evil in the influence of each. Not vague protestations of friendship, not common interests in trade, commercial treaties, or industrial partnership, can secure us from the constant risk of rupture. If harmony between England and France is good at all for the countries themselves and for their neighbours, the conditions of that harmony are not to be mistaken. Each country must have a settled and deliberate scheme of policy; the policy of both, in the main, must coincide. It must be worked up into systematic concert with good faith, forbearance, and patience; and it must tend not towards the individual interests of either so much as the permanent welfare of the great state system which they control.

The task is to learn whether and in what way such a union of policy is practically possible. Can any joint action of the two Powers be shown to accord with the history and traditions, with the actual position and necessities, of each? For this view it will be well to take a survey, first, of the historical relations of the two nations throughout the course of recent and, indeed, of modern history; secondly, of the actual state system of Europe, and the position and functions which they occupy within it.

II

It is only at the close of the long wars which marked the ruin of feudalism that true political relations exist between England and France as parts of a European body of states. From that time to the present, a period of 440 years, it will be found that whenever the policy of the two countries has been vigorous and



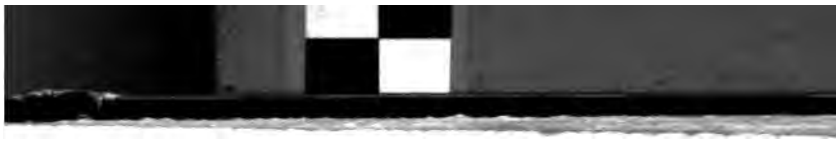
wise, whenever they have both been fulfilling their natural functions in that body of states, the relations between them have been friendly and never directly hostile. On the other hand, whenever those relations have been hostile, it has been when one or other was pursuing a policy ruinous in itself, and which it has ultimately been forced to abandon. The wars of England and France mark, in fact, their grand crimes and blunders as nations. Their normal condition—the condition of their grandest national successes—is peace; or, rather, what is more than peace, co-operation. It is a significant fact, and one which we too seldom remember, that, mere military glory apart (which can be won in the worst as in the best of causes), all that is noblest as political achievement throughout the vicissitudes of European complications for four centuries, the policy of all the true statesmen who have left us a heritage of wisdom, has been characterised by the maintenance of union with France.

Our greatest statesmen and their greatest statesmen —those whose policy we now can profitably recall— all uniformly combined in this. It has been repudiated only by those whose policy has been cancelled by events. The prejudices which have sprung from our ancient and from our recent triumphs in war are so strong on us that propositions like these are regarded as a paradox. They form, however, rules without any true exception. There have been times when the policy of England, or when that of France, was in desperate defiance of all their duties and their traditions. At such moments the weight of the other has been thrown into the opposite scale, and furious contests have ensued. But their normal relations have been those of peace. And no broad survey of history can obscure the truth that, from its consolidation in the fifteenth century

down to the latter half of the reign of Louis XIV., the general tendency of the French monarchy has been towards harmony with the English.

The patience and address with which the sagacious Louis XI. averted the vainglorious invasion of Edward IV., the transparent want of purpose that invasion betrayed, the anxiety of Louis for peace, the ease with which the English king and his council allowed themselves to be cajoled, mark the close of the long national feud, the substitution of nations for fiefs, and statecraft for military adventure. The French policy of Henry VIII. is little but a repetition of the conduct of Edward. There is the same pretentious invasion, the conventional war-cry, the same willingness to treat, the same mutual respect and desire for peace. With the Louises, Ferdinands, and Henrys of the fifteenth century these conflicts were due rather to inveterate habit than to active animosities; and they had too similar and too arduous duties at home to make any of them very desirous of serious wars. With the sixteenth century—the age of Henry VIII., Francis, and Charles V.—the actual state system of Europe comes clearly into view. We have now the existing national limits, definite international relations, and permanent objects of state.

It may be difficult in the confusion which precedes the first great settlement to trace exactly any intelligible policy; but amidst all the kaleidoscopic complications of the time there stands out clearly the growing importance of England in the European system, the preponderance which at any moment it can give to France, the immense force of both of them united, and the real affinity of their true interests and national objects. Capricious as was the policy of Francis and that of Henry, personal and trivial as were the motives which often controlled it, it was in the

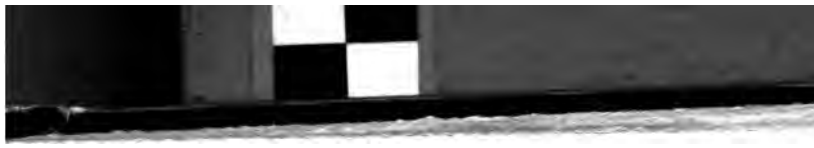


main the policy of natural allies and not of natural enemies. *Cui adhaereo praeest* was the famous motto of Henry—a motto as true now as it was then. It did not mean the destruction of France. And when at last Henry threw in his lot with the captive Francis at his worst strait, and enabled him to recover his kingdom, he instituted a great maxim of policy—that England has an interest in having her neighbour at once progressive and strong, for France has with England the joint protectorate of Europe against absolute dominion and retrograde oppression.

With the growth of the power of Charles V. (whose life is justly taken as marking the rise of our modern state system) there comes into view clearly the principle which for the three succeeding centuries has more or less distinctly formed the clue to European history. In spite of serious exceptions and perturbations, a clear tendency appears that the conservative forces, both spiritual and temporal, should gather round the House of Austria, and centre in South Germany and Spain; that the progressive forces are jointly or alternately led by England and France; whilst Italy and the whole left bank of the Rhine form at once the battle-ground and the prize. During the sixteenth century, for the most part, the temporal struggle is lost and drowned in the spiritual. Political antagonisms and affinities are merged in the religious. The death-grapple of the two faiths was nerved by a special fanaticism, which overrides all the combinations of policy, interest, and reason. Yet in the midst of these convulsions the same general tendency is at work. France in the struggle is torn into two factions; her position is nullified, and her strength paralysed, whilst she is preparing for the middle ground which in the religious aspect of the great contest she has ever since maintained.

England, if not so equally divided, sways backwards and forwards with still more violent revulsions. In the meantime the House of Austria is still the centre of the religious as of the political reaction. From time to time some Philip or Catherine steals in, like the genius of evil, to lure England or France into opposite camps. From time to time the very existence of states seems lost in the violence of civic disintegration. The deadly struggle in which the life of our great sovereign Elizabeth was passed might well have blinded a mind less capacious and calm to the true affinities of states. But in the worst of her straits, in spite of the danger to her person and her people, in spite of the fanatical hatred with which both were assailed by the Court party of France, neither Elizabeth nor her ministers ever lost sight of the truth that England and France in the European system are not natural enemies but natural allies. Yet this great truth, which civil convulsion and religious frenzy for a time had obscured, broke forth only into clear light when France had shaken off the fever of reaction, and the wise and noble policy of Henry IV. had begun to restore her to health and vigour.

The spirit of that great king was well met with that of the great queen; and history can give us no finer instance of political sagacity than we see in the hearty and confiding alliance of these two consummate rulers. "She was another self," said Henry; "the irreconcilable enemy of my irreconcilable enemies." Indeed, if we were to search for the type of the natural attitude of the Governments to each other, we could have no better form of it than in the history of this period. Mutual confidence and respect, a generous spirit of co-operation, a consciousness of a common duty, but a spirit always tempered by watchfulness and caution, was the spirit in which they assumed their



protectorship of Europe. This is not the place to analyse or weigh the famous Political Design of Henry, the scheme for the pacification and settlement of Europe. Nothing would be more mistaken than to regard it as the chimera of one visionary brain. The scheme was thoroughly reduced to practical working. It had gradually won its way into the cautious mind of the veteran Sully. It received the actual adhesion of a large proportion of the European Powers, and nothing but the dagger of Ravaillac prevented its immediate execution.

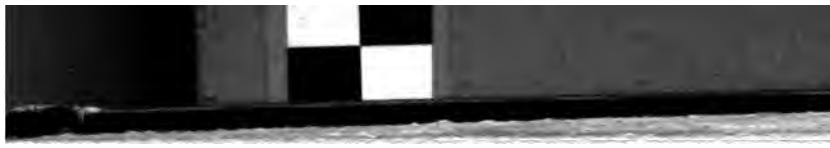
But the scheme, as we read it in Sully, was as thoroughly that of Elizabeth as it was that of Henry. She had been the earliest and the staunchest maintainer of the central purpose of the design. It was impossible without the active co-operation of England; and on the death of Elizabeth, Henry regarded it as almost annihilated. This is not the place to decide upon its wisdom or its practicability. It may be that, as a reconstructive system, it was impossible or premature; but the idea on which it rested is an idea as definite as it is true. That idea is the reality of the system of states in Europe, the necessity for their harmony and co-operation, the leading part which her history and position give to France in the common councils of Europe, the need of an intimate alliance with England, and the conviction, that with both combined the cause of good government, progress, and peace resides.

The conception of the greatest of the French kings long ruled the policy of French statesmen. This grand, if premature, idea was maintained by a series of ministers, wise, or respectable at least, down to the time when the tumid ambition of Louis XIV. ruined his country and blotted out his dynasty. Neither that deplorable catastrophe nor the delirium of the revolutionary wars have succeeded in destroying it; and it

remains now, what it was two centuries and a half ago, the deep conviction of thoughtful minds on both sides of the Channel, and the true key of European politics.

For a moment the fanatical party which struck down the great Henry in the full maturity of his wisdom succeeded in perverting from its path the public action of his beloved country. Their tenure of power was long enough to complete that ill-starred marriage with the House of Austria—that adulterous mingling, it has been said, of the blood of Henry and of Philip. But the genius of France, as though aroused by this outrage, lived again in the spirit of the great successor of Henry; he who, with yet greater difficulties, carried on the same work with yet greater power—the most successful of modern statesmen—the profound and majestic Richelieu. For twenty-six years the policy of France was directed on one unbending but sagacious system, which almost created France as a nation, if it did not create its national character, and which certainly for a century and a half stamped its impress on the history of Europe. The first act of Richelieu as minister was to announce the return to the policy of the late king, and to attempt to reopen the English alliance by the marriage with Charles. At the close of his unbroken career the ground was already prepared for the settlement which resulted in the peace of Westphalia; the settlement which for two centuries has been, and still in some sense is, the basis of the state system of modern Europe; the settlement which half realised the design of Henry, which his design might possibly have accomplished without the thirty years of carnage.

The policy of Richelieu is far too strongly marked and too well understood to need any commentary here. It is a policy so systematic in principle and so rich in its actual fruits that it may be taken as the typical and



historical policy of France. As such we can judge it. The policy of France was again in the hands of a great man, and again it was a policy in substance the same. The policy of England is no longer in the hands of a great ruler, but becomes utterly incoherent and contemptible under the intriguing bigotry of the race of Stuart. But the policy of France is not altered; France again assumes the leadership of the progressive movement in Europe, and again, as a first condition, solicits the active co-operation of England. The help meet for him, which in a later generation he might have found in the political genius of Cromwell, Richelieu was forced to eke out by the mere military genius of Gustavus. The influence of England under the Stuarts was nothing except when it was evil. But in spite of the sore trials to his principles, in spite of the vacillations, bigotry, and falseness of the wretched Stuart Courts, in spite even of the demagogic support of La Rochelle, Richelieu was never betrayed into a hostile attitude to England, never even overlooked the inherent strength of her position. The English prisoners at Rhé were sent home honourably; no reasonable opportunity of peace was neglected; and the whole system of the most systematic of modern statesmen supposes cordiality and union with England.

That system was only not carried out with the full co-operation of England because for the time, in her own internal convulsions, England was withdrawn from action abroad. But it was carried out, if not with England herself, with the natural allies of England,—by the same means, to the same end, and with the same spirit with which, both before and afterwards, the name of England was identified. In the hands of Richelieu the policy of Henry was modified and developed, but it was essentially the same. To concentrate and complete the greatness of the country

without yielding to the lust of covetous aggression; to conciliate and balance the rival fanaticisms in religion without giving victory to either; to rest the frontiers of states on geographical and national bases; to establish liberty of conscience without political anarchy; to humble the reactionary dynasties without unlimited revolution; to determine the final ascendency of the progressive over the retrograde system; and to make France the heart of this action by giving her a moral rather than a material empire,—such, in brief, was the work of the great dictator.

The policy of Richelieu was one so solidly based that it suffered scarcely any interruption by his death; and again, for eighteen years, his system was continued by his servant and pupil Mazarin. The irregular conditions and the inferior capacity of this ministry rob that system, if not of its success, at least of its dignity and distinctness. The characteristic intrigue, the shifting combinations, and the personal meanness which disfigure the statecraft of Mazarin, are but too often repeated by the anecdote-mongers of history as the substance, and not as the adjunct, of his policy. Viewed by a broader light, it was but the legitimate continuation of the policy of Richelieu, as that was the legitimate continuation of the policy of Henry. The weapons of the bygone chiefs tremble in the feebler hands of their successors. But they are yet sufficient for their work. How right and systematic the task was, the closing triumph of the life of Mazarin—the treaty of the Pyrenees—draws in most striking lines.

When we see the ruler of France — even an Italian, a churchman, and a cardinal—the virtual author of the most concentrated of autocracies, allying himself with the English Republic, with the acknowledged head of Protestantism, and jointly with him



labouring towards a common object, securing the degradation of the great Spanish despotism and the definite ascendency of France, we recognise the grand current of affairs shaping itself to its determined course across all the minor obstacles of individual wills and disturbing accidents. Internal difficulties and the complication of interests for a time separated the chief imitator from the great rival of Richelieu; but as soon as they thoroughly understood each other, so soon as the relations of states grew definite, the policy of Mazarin and of Cromwell was convergent and not antagonistic. Both were in the deepest sense traditional, both were intensely national, and both essentially systematic. And it is of high historical significance that in orbits so different we find their common progression so similar.

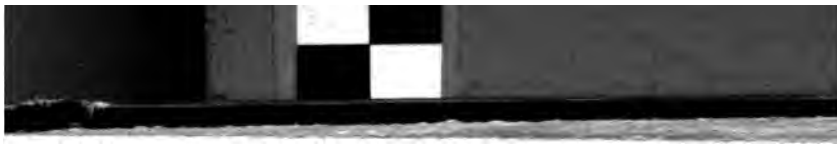
But Mazarin, with all his claims as a politician, can as little compare with Cromwell in true sagacity as he can in greatness of purpose. The greatest of the Protestant chiefs was also among the foremost of modern statesmen. Those who look with immoderate pride on our distant dominions, and with immoderate fear on their ultimate abandonment, are the men who mistrust the true greatness and strength of Britain and its inhabitants. Such may learn a useful lesson by turning to the position which England held in Europe under Cromwell—England, without Indian, American, or Australian Empires; without Gibraltar, without Malta, without Hong Kong, and without one of those thousand posts where the British flag now studs the Pacific and the Asiatic Oceans.

A few years of a great man's rule raised her from utter insignificance and abasement, to be in material strength among the first, in moral purpose the first of the nations of Europe, the leader of free civilisation and the destinies of the West, the hope and help of the oppressed, the curb of the tyrant. Trammelled as

he was by his narrow creed, and fired by the national lust for maritime aggrandisement, the policy of the great Protector abroad tended at times to fanaticism, at times to injustice; but into one error, however imminent, he never fell. He never mistook the truth that the Catholicism of France was, in its way, no less progressive than the Protestantism of England; that the true ends of both countries could not be served by opposition; that their cordial union was essential to the security and welfare of Europe. As Richelieu had continued the policy of Henry in France, Cromwell recalled to life the policy of Elizabeth in England; and the lives of the two wisest of the modern rulers of England, and the two wisest who, in modern times, have ruled France, thus fall in their main notes into perfect harmony and natural sequence.

We come now to the disastrous epoch when all union was destroyed by the fatal influences which had long been gathering within and around the doomed monarchy of France.

The latter portion of the reign of Louis XIV., as the pacific influence of the great Colbert declines, brings us to this disastrous change. It is no less than the contradiction of the policy which the great men of France had upheld for a century, and the annihilation of her well-earned place and influence. The later years of the Grand Monarque form just that period of her history in which France is the farthest from the true political leadership of Europe, at the lowest point of her national greatness. Spurred on by his own arrogance and by intriguing bigots, the King, whose duty it was, and whose pride it had once been, to follow the steps of Henry IV. and Sully, of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Colbert, passed over with his whole force to the enemy; called round himself the retrograde powers which it had been the glory of his



throne to have curbed, and used the influence which, to protect Europe from oppression, had been conceded to France, in the very work of making France the oppressor of Europe.

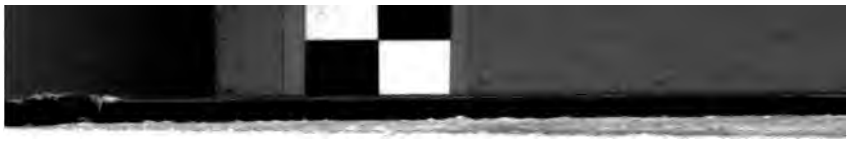
South Germany practically passed over to the side of freedom, and France inherited and extended the sinister traditions of Spain. Dazzled by the power which his predecessors had won in the cause of progress, he turned its forces to the cause of repression. For Europe nothing was left but signal retribution on the apostate dynasty; and the heroic resolution of the great Dutch chief, in whom lived again the antagonist of Philip, and the daring genius of Marlborough, gave us the few amongst our triumphs over France to which Englishmen can look back with unmixed pride.

The true headship of Europe, moral and intellectual, which the character and genius of Elizabeth and of Cromwell for a season had twice before given her, passed over for a season distinctly to England. During the whole of the century preceding the Revolution, the movement of Europe is speculative, religious, industrial, and social, rather than political. Political action is feeble and confused, and but one great character occupies the field. Yet whilst it is plain that England bore a large, at times the largest, share in the scientific and industrial movement, in the political sphere she no less manifestly possessed the casting vote, the reserve force, the ultimate appeal of Europe.

During the period of ignoble intrigue which intervenes between the Peace of Utrecht and the French Revolution, it would be useless to look for any high, or indeed any settled, political purpose. In the collapse of all political aims and convictions, the relations of states are reduced to a mere struggle for material advantages—on the side of England to a blind

and profligate struggle for maritime ascendency and colonial empire. This much, however, is clear. The criminal extravagance of Louis XIV. once bitterly avenged, France tends feebly to recover her natural ground; and the English and the French statesmen, or rather the feeble diplomatists of the day, again tend towards a real alliance, watchful and broken as it was. Walpole indeed—a statesman whose sagacious zeal for the general welfare of England outweighs the corrupt means with which he bent a corrupt aristocracy into reason—succeeded during the long years in which he governed England in maintaining unbroken a cordial alliance with France. When the jealousy of a worthless cabal forced him to surrender, first his principles and shortly afterwards his power, it was Spain, not France, which was the object of the national antipathy, or rather of the national cupidity.

The Triple Alliance, the Quadruple Alliance, both equally point to the fact that, though the old European parties are almost extinguished, the tradition of England and France as allies against the reactionary powers was not wholly forgotten. It is even some compensation to France for the humiliation of enduring such rulers as the Regent, Dubois, and Fleury, that they had the good sense to cling fast to this principle; so that their ignoble scheming was far less injurious to their country than that of the ambitious bigots who succeeded them. Unhappily the direction of France passed into the hands of men who, to corruption hardly less than theirs and with far inferior vigour, added the retrograde ambition of Louis XIV. France again, under the guidance of incorrigible fanatics or the creatures of royal debauchery, is seen to pass to the side of the oft-stricken House of Austria and the Bourbons of Spain. Aghast at the sight of the new Prussia, which by a happy return to her traditionary



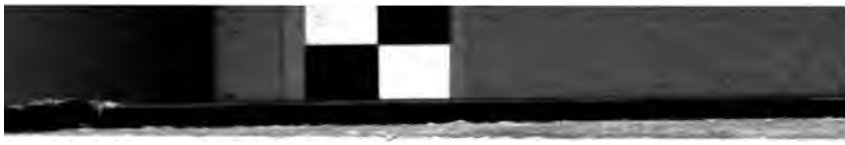
policy France had assisted to found, the blind successors of Richelieu joined in the ill-starred coalition to crush the only modern king who was worthy to be his peer.

England, in the main, corrects the balance which the wretched incapacity of French policy is continually unsettling. In the main her action in Europe, always more pacific than those of the other states, though for causes which do her small honour, tends in Europe to the side of order, freedom, and national independence. Beyond the limits of the Western system, it is true, her policy is one long and dark story of colonial aggression and commercial rapacity. But within it she maintains the part which, with the superior advantage of her position, France had in the previous century more systematically supported. She resists the reactionary ambition of Spain; she steadily opposes all further extension of the House of Austria; she cultivates the alliance, where it is possible, of France; she is favourable to, but watchful of, the rise of Prussia; she interferes to prevent the premature and selfish dismemberment of Austria herself; she turns again to prevent the tyrannical attempt at the dismemberment of Prussia. In every treaty and almost every alliance her might is felt; in the main it is exerted in the interests of European progress, her deeper energies and thoughts being concentrated upon the task of founding her colonial empire.

It is a policy which, had it been followed consistently by free statesmen and not by successions of parliamentary partisans, might have been accounted almost wise; and had it been less deeply vitiated by the lust of mercantile aggrandisement, might almost have been remembered as honourable. Illumined now by the sterling sense of Walpole, now by the grand but overweening character of Chatham, now by the heroism of Rodney and Wolfe,—with all its vices and

its virtues, it was the policy of an aristocracy which, whilst offering to the middle classes as the price of rule the plunder of the seas and of the East, was not wholly incapable of directing the action of a free and progressive people. Unstable and personal as that policy was, and at times frightfully unscrupulous, it was frequently betrayed into hostility with France; but no reasonable student of history can judge it when taken in the main as anything but the feeble reproduction of the policy of our greater statesmen,—the policy of upholding the course of liberty and national independence in Europe against the retrograde powers and against attempts at violent aggression. Assuredly no candid mind can judge it (again when looked at broadly as a whole) as a policy of settled antagonism to France, as based on any deep difference of principle or any inveterate antipathy of race.

Such was the state of things at the moment of the great crisis,—the long-gathering revolution of Europe. The whole fabric of the degenerate monarchy of France, with the spiritual and temporal forces which had gathered round it, was overturned; and the wrongs which the Louises and their courtiers had done to France, to peace, to freedom, and to reason were fiercely avenged. The violence of the crisis was extreme; but it was clear then, and it grows ever clearer to us now, that amidst it France was working out the legitimate issue of her whole past and entering on the system of the future. Again, and now in a far more emphatic manner, the genius of French civilisation carried her to the head of the European movement; and this time it was a headship at once political, social, and intellectual. She had to call into life and to sustain the principle of rule in accordance with national necessities, which has remodelled, and is still remodelling, the state system of Europe; she had the



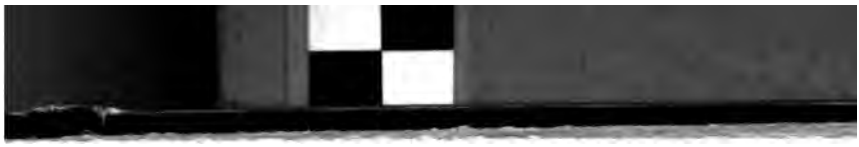
yet more difficult and the longer task of reconstructing society on the basis of organised labour; she had the leading part in the most arduous task of all, that which both precedes and must systemise the rest,—the task of reducing into practice the new philosophy of society, which the progress of European thought had evolved; she had undertaken to lead the way towards the regeneration of the political doctrines, of the national unity, of the social system,—the law, the administration, the industry, and the religion of Europe. The effort was made most imperfectly and most stormily, with the aid of the leading minds and characters of Europe consciously co-operating for a century, in spite of organised opposition without and chaotic confusion within; and Europe still owes to her a debt of gratitude for the sacrifices and agonies she endured in the spasms of this momentous birth.

The true nature of this great movement, and the part which England might have played in it, was seen by the greater spirits, and by the national instinct in this country and elsewhere, and felt even by the abler section of our governing aristocracy. Unfortunately for England and for the world, the voice of Fox and Macintosh was drowned by the selfish terrors of the dominant majority, and the whole force of England was thrown into the reactionary scale. The tragic pathos of Burke and the lofty resolution of Pitt, in doing battle for the ancient order, almost blind us yet to the fatal badness of their cause. Many a doomed system has given a sort of melancholy grandeur to its last defenders. But neither the character nor the genius of Cicero, of Pope Sixtus, of Parma, or of Strafford can make us forget that their success would have arrested the progress of mankind.

After the mean and hesitating policy of preceding statesmen, there is something of at least grand fanati-

cism in the furious attack of England on revolutionary France, and unquestionably much that is heroic in the latter period, when the war had become one of liberty and of defence. The English aristocracy committed the blunder and the crime which had ruined the monarchy of France, with even less ground of excuse and (to Europe) far more disastrous result. At the close of the seventeenth century the ambition of Louis XIV. had attempted to use the position which the history of his country had given him in the work of destroying that position and undoing that history. At the close of the eighteenth the panic of the governing class of England turned the force which, in the name of industry, progress, peace, and freedom, they were permitted to direct, to the task of crushing out a new phase of all of these at once. Doubtless it was a revolution, and a portentous one — one destined to modify their whole position and power,—which they were called upon to welcome. But they were themselves the product of a successful revolution, and were forced by every principle they asserted to carry it to its natural conclusion. Deliberately, at the most critical moment of modern history, they chose the wrong cause; and again, of the two nations the leaders of civilisation, one passed over with its whole force to the side of the enemy.

That the official course of English policy was on the wrong side, has been demonstrated by events. Temporarily, outwardly, its resistance was successful. It succeeded in re-establishing the ancient monarchy; it succeeded in crushing and almost in proscribing the new spirit. In the blind settlement known as the Treaties of Vienna they thought to establish the old order permanently. Every act of that settlement has been undone and is undoing before our eyes. The successors of the English reactionaries are now leagued



with the successors of the revolutionary chief to carry out the principles which that revolution inaugurated. It is in vain now to point to the fatal and frightful extravagances which accompanied the actual crisis. The revolution was carried out under conditions so adverse and special that no judgment can be passed as to how far these extravagances were inherent in it or were induced by circumstances. The French nation were forced to carry out the greatest and most arduous of all social changes under foreign aggression more formidable than any modern people has endured. France, in a word, was martyred by and for her sister nations.

To the careful student of the Revolution, the spasms of the Reign of Terror keep cadence, beat for beat, with the tramp of the foreign invaders. The culminating agony of the struggle within coincides almost to a few days with the height of the danger from without. As Europe advances in arms, the murders in the prisons begin; as the Coalition thunders forth its threats, the delirium is at its height; as the defeated invaders retreat, the guillotine descends.

It is in vain also now to pretend that the Coalition itself was a work of defence. It is a pretext too shallow to be now repeated that France in the hour of her extreme prostration—utterly disorganised, without an army or a navy, government or supplies; without credit, money, or resources—was becoming a danger to Europe, was meditating general aggression or dominion. The trope of her great leader, Danton, is as true as it is wild. France only took up the gage of battle that was hurled at her, and flung down before Europe the head of a king. But the attack on France was no more one of legitimate defence than the attack of the northern autocrats on Poland was defensive. In both cases it was a conspiracy at once to crush out a freedom which they dreaded, and to divide the spoil

which they coveted. Never had people been so cruelly and wantonly bested. Having in pursuit of a dominant idea disarmed herself and reduced herself almost to helplessness, with scarcely a trained soldier under her standards or a general of division who could be trusted, France found herself the object of attack from a Coalition of almost every state in Europe, with four or five armies of as many Powers upon her soil: her officials corrupted, her provinces stirred into revolt, her ports blockaded, her commerce destroyed, her fortresses razed, her soil honeycombed with foreign conspiracies: her name, her national character, government, institutions, and principles held up to violent invective from every corner of Europe: half a million of men in arms with the avowed object of annihilating her as a nation, and fomenting with rancorous energy every form of civic confusion, discord, and treachery.

And this was done in the name of a cause which the right hand of that Coalition has utterly discarded. Of late years, in the eyes of certain schools, England has been even more identified with the leading principles of this great change than France herself. Mistaken as this is, it serves to show how completely England has abandoned the Coalition. With or without the aid of England, as a fact the spirit of the Revolution, in a moral sense, has triumphed. The principle that the permanent good of the entire people is paramount; that nations have no solid basis except as they represent the wants and desires of an aggregate race; that all rule is tyrannical which is alien to the popular will; that national greatness is based on industrial and not on military activity; that public life must come to embrace all members of the nation, educated, trained, and organised for this end; that by steady but incessant steps the whole of our modern institutions, European, national, and social, must be

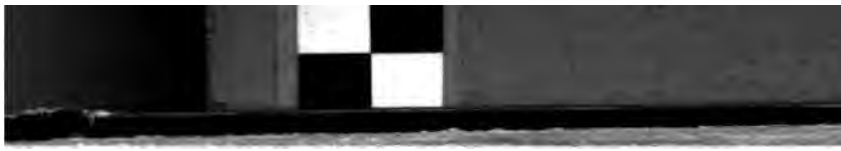
remodelled upon the new basis,—such are the principles which are now the very maxims of all who believe at once in progress and in order, whether in France or England, in any part of civilised Europe; and these are at bottom the principles of the Revolution. Until these principles are frankly accepted by those who rule this country, and until they still further acknowledge that with France lies their initiation and their earliest and fullest development, the action of England in Europe must remain vacillating, inexplicable, and neutral.

This spirit has already deeply penetrated the brain and the conscience of this country; but its cordial adoption by any political party will at once make that party the natural directors of its policy. The traditional Whig statesmen have just courage enough to repudiate the language of the Coalition, but not enough to welcome the vital strength of the Revolution. All who refuse this are disqualified at once for any useful foreign policy. But the moment that those who rule here have determined to adopt it, the relations of England and France at once become consistent, intelligible, and cordial. Their historical attitude is resumed; they again pursue their common work with the same spirit, but in different modes—the common work with which the greater rulers of each country are closely identified; the work which for three centuries they have carried on without serious interruption, except on the two occasions when the arrogance of Louis and the conservatism of Pitt drove their respective people headlong on the path of evil.

The monstrous ambition of Napoleon was the sinister result of the Coalition wars. And grievously have France and Europe paid the penalty. England took a foremost part in the necessary task of crushing the new tyranny of Napoleonic Imperialism. Since the peace the history of the relations of England

with France is the history of the renunciation of all the principles with which the Coalition entered into war. In a moral sense, and to the political student, France has redressed her material defeat by the triumph of her social ideas. Waterloo has been thrice avenged by the victors combining with the vanquished to enforce the principles of which that battlefield was once thought to be the grave. Every one of the great acts of the drama of European history has been a fresh gain to the cause of the Revolution, to that of nationality, republicanism, social and international fraternity; public opinion, justice, and moral right. Since the days of Canning, whether directed by Whig or Tory politicians, it has been a question only whether the policy of England should welcome these principles with greater or less frankness.

So soon as the military ambition of Napoleon and his bastard imperialism was crushed and the bitterness which its suppression produced was extinct, the policy of England and France reverted to its ancient convergence of purpose, and both resumed something of their natural functions. The negotiations respecting Poland in 1831, abortive as they were, and feeble as they exhibit the statesmen of England to have been, bring before us France again in her former position as the promoter of the cause of freedom and nationality in Europe, but as hoping to succeed in it only through the co-operation of England. On each occasion on which the undying Polish struggle has been felt—in 1846, in 1848, in 1855, and 1864—the same thing has been seen, and on each occasion with increasing distinctness. Putting aside the miserable squabbles arising out of extra-European embroilments and dynastic intrigues, on the greater questions of European politics, the policy of England and France has tended to agreement in the interests of order and progress.



That it has resulted in so little was due largely to the peculiar timidity of the politicians who directed the foreign policy of the two countries. During the convulsion of 1848 the same causes were perpetually at work, but were deprived of any practical result by the same personal indecision and incoherence of aim. The accession of a strong hand to the policy of France, coinciding with something like a strong and popular administration in England, has for the first time enabled these principles to bear fruits of any worth. The Crimean War — begun by France mainly for dynastic and military, by England for commercial and Asiatic, ends — slowly became, under the forming principle of public opinion, and by sheer force of the natural truth of the relation, a really European movement, of which France and England were at once the heads and the arms. Unsatisfactory as much of this policy is, it was at bottom the combination of the West for European objects under its natural leaders.

To the perplexity of some of the politicians engaged, the closing phase of this war, in the Conference of Paris, showed a moral dignity and foresight which for the first time realised in outline the future congresses and settlements of the West. The regeneration of Italy, the natural sequence of the Conference of Paris — which forms with it the bright side of the second empire — is but a continuation of the same policy. In spite of jealousies and caprices, the restoration of Italy has been the work of England and of France together; a work to which Napoleon has given the initiative, but the issue of which is in the hands of the entire English and the entire French nation. In the Polish and Danish wars, in nearly every European question which arises, the same principles are apparent. Now, as so often before, the nations seem to force this part spontaneously on the

two heads of the Western system. That it hitherto has had results so small is due to the extreme difficulty of the situation and to the personal prejudices of the politicians. To Napoleon III. it must be conceded that he has recognised this principle more steadily than any statesman in England or in France. His rule, for the first time in recent history, brought it to efficient results, and each year of it has strengthened and illustrated the principle. His strong and fixed desire for a European congress is but one form of it; a desire which must one day be realised. In the meantime each year teems with proofs that the set of all public opinion in Europe, and of general events, is towards an active combination between England and France to realise without convulsion the necessary changes in its condition.

III

In the association of nations it requires little reasoning to show that England and France hold a preponderating place. By their material force, by their industrial greatness, by their national cohesion and energy, no less than by their traditions and their prestige, they are marked out as the twin chiefs of the European system. Great promise in the future is found in other nations and races. As great and even greater elements of moral or intellectual eminence belong to other people; but no reasonable mind can doubt that, for all the practical ends of actual politics, England and France have for the moment a distinct pre-eminence in Europe. In that union of innate strength, material resources, moral prestige, historical renown, and popular enlightenment which political



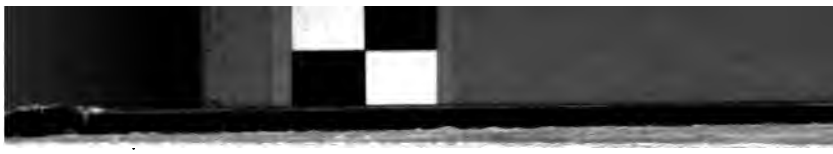
leadership in these days implies, no other state at present can practically compare with these two (written in 1864).

On every ground Russia can make no fair claim to such a place. As a Power semi-Oriental and semi-civilised, she is clearly outside the pale of our modern political life. A nation still struggling in the throes of serfdom, and to the very existence of which a military autocracy seems essential, can interfere in the movement of our political activity to nothing but a sinister end. The heterogeneous soldiery of Prussia and Austria point to the bifurcation of Germany as a political force. Besides these, no other Power in Europe can pretend to the material and moral weight which a leading Power must combine. On the other hand, the influence exercised both by England and by France in their respective spheres is very real and definite. The European state system itself is shaken by several conflicting principles, which complicate the relations of its members and often neutralise the action of the whole.

Catholicism and Protestantism, with much diminished vigour, still control and agitate it on periodical occasions. The great religious struggle is being gradually lost in the new struggle of established Christianity against philosophy and science. But the antagonism of the Catholic and the Protestant interests, which in the minor questions of European politics—in the development of Belgium, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and Spain—is constantly but irregularly at work, rises occasionally, as in the Polish contest, into a feature of extreme importance. It assumes even deeper significance in the whole Italian question and that of Papal independence—a question which underlies and will outlast any temporary solution of the military occupation of Rome.

An antagonism somewhat similar in its extent, somewhat deeper in its effects, though far less defined, is that division of race into the great classes of the Latin and the Teutonic. But easily as the feeling of race disappears or is neutralised under strong pressure, its subtle and persistent influence, so closely connected with every element of civilisation, produces a real antagonism, or rather co-ordination, amongst the Powers of Europe. No practical statesman can afford to underestimate its force, for it expresses real and profound varieties of national character. And it would be an idle dream to suppose that a Latin and a Teutonic people will for ages exhibit the same affinity as that which exists between two peoples of the same origin. Connected with the religious and ethnological, and nearly identical in area, is another dualism—that between the peoples who have modified and retained the feudal organisation of society and those who have transformed it into a new social system; where the hierarchy of birth and office is in full ascendency, as in Germany, or under legal and constitutional restrictions, as in England; and where it has given place totally, as in France, partially, as in Spain and Italy, to social equality and military autocracy.

Akin to this is the contrast between the principles of hereditary and of republican government, between nations with whom the aristocratic and monarchic system is in full vitality, as in Germany and England, and those with whom, as in France, the popular will reigns supreme, more or less identified with an individual dictator. There is, again, the struggle between industrialism and militarism; between a localised and a centralised form of administration; between parliamentary and bureaucratic institutions. All of these are principles which combine to form something like a dual system in the Western group of nations, which



divide them, more or less equally, and with many cross-divisions, into two camps. They are principles, moreover, which subdivide each nation within itself, and separate them into rival and counterbalancing parties.

At the head of these two great groups of nations in Europe, of these two principles which divide each nation, stand respectively England and France. One or other of them is the fair representative and type of every one of these elements of European society, though neither expresses them in a quite exclusive form. Round England centre the sympathies of all in Europe that is Teutonic, Protestant, conservative, parliamentary, and commercial. France, in like manner, is the centre of the Latin, the Catholic, the democratic, the centralised, and the revolutionary element. The action of England and of France is so closely identified with these respective principles that neither Power alone can give any continuous support to a movement identified with the principles of the other party.

Over the smaller seaboard peoples of Europe the influence of England is in the ascendant. Over Denmark, Holland, Scandinavia, over Portugal and Turkey, the prestige of England reigns as in a congenial soil. This is the result of an obvious identity of interest or pursuit, and the fact that these smaller Powers are in an especial manner brought face to face with her material strength and maritime dominion. Scandinavia, Holland, and North Germany see in her the principal and most systematically Protestant Power. Prussia, Holland, and Italy necessarily look towards her for the type of those parliamentary and constitutional systems which they seem bent on developing for themselves. It is part of the traditions of the Austrian crown that it owes its very existence to England; and hateful to our ears as is the aristo-

cratic dogma of our "ancient alliance" with Austria, to her, in spite of her irritation, it is a grim necessity to cling to and to uphold. For to England turn the eyes of all who dread violent change, as well as of all who apprehend aggression. All feel that England is the only one of the Great Powers of Europe who can gain nothing and who will not profit by dynastic and territorial revolution on the Continent.

England (which in the East is the disturber of peace and rest) in Europe is naturally identified with commerce, industry, and peace. Her government again, as the only government of Europe which has never suffered an external overthrow, and for two centuries has suffered no approach to an internal convulsion, is the great symbol of stability in the West. Her crown—by far the oldest and most illustrious of all the crowns of Europe, which was a great European monarchy at a time when Hapsburgs and Brandenburgs, Romanoffs and Dukes of Savoy, were robber chiefs; when Italy was a network of republics, Germany a collection of baronies, and Spain was occupied by Moors—is now, since the extinction of the shadow of the Roman Empire and the fall of the House of Capet, the great centre of all the historical traditions. In a word, England is felt to represent and to support upon the Continent the sentiment of order, national stability, recognised law, and historical permanence; of personal freedom, of free speech, of equal justice, of administrative independence; the expansion of industry, free trade, and commercial intercourse; the maintenance of ancient rights and resistance to wanton change; the independence of the smallest member of the European family of nations. It is a leading and a noble part that she plays amongst them; though the least reflection will show that it is but one side of the European movement, but one



element of our modern civilisation, of which she is the recognised organ, and that one not the most characteristic.

We turn now to France, which in the other great side of the European movement possesses a still more unquestioned predominance. She is the recognised head of the Latin race, between the members of which, for several reasons, historical as well as political, there is a much stronger bond than exists between nations of Teutonic origin. She is still (1866) the head of Catholicism, partly as being by far the most powerful of the Catholic Powers, partly because she holds the Papacy in her hand. Quite apart from the actual muster-roll of her armies, which may vary with political circumstances and parties, she is at present the first military power of the Continent. None contest her claim to be the second naval power in Europe, not so much from the number and equipment of her ships of war, her Gloires and her Cherbourgs, but from the high aptitude of her sons for scientific warfare whether on land or sea, the extent of her coasts, the excellence of her ports, her commercial activity, and her ancient maritime traditions. In industrial development, in manufacturing energy, the French people are second only to ourselves, and if organisation and art are regarded in industry, quite our equals. All these are, it is true, but minor requisites of national greatness, but they are indispensable, and without them no nation can pretend, in our present state of opinion, to occupy a prominent rank.

The great distinctive feature of France as a nation is, however, the very simple one of her geographical position. Her border closely abuts on at least seven of the European states. In the system of Western Europe she distinctly occupies the centre, and is the only Power in close local connection with England.

Local connection, of course, is of great importance in governing international relations. No one who reflects on the innumerable channels through which movements, social, political, and literary, radiate from Paris throughout Europe, can fail to recognise the importance of occupying this geographical centre. Let us conceive the relative weight of an insurrection or a change of government in Paris and in any other capital in Europe. There is but one city of Europe towards which gravitate the cultivated and thoughtful of every nation, in the movements, ideas, arts, and habits of which all take a greater or a less interest. Let us compare the relative degree of publicity and value which popularly attaches to any political scheme, any social, historical, or political theory propounded in Paris, and one propounded in any existing city.

The Parisian Press, publicists, and jurists alone can be called common to Europe. The undisputed acceptance of the French language as the common political and international medium is, if we give its true place to language, almost by itself decisive. Let Frenchmen assert a statement, however contrary to fact; promulgate a social system, however chimerical; or be suspected of a design, however extravagant,—all for a time will hold their ground in the mind of Europe with vitality out of proportion to their merit. It does not advance the question to insist that all this is but to the discredit of the other peoples of Europe; that they should travel to other cities, use some other language, read some other writers, study other arts, ideas, and movements than those of France. All we are now concerned with is the fact. As a matter of fact, taking one people with another and one subject with another, the bulk of the people of Europe do turn in the questions of social life in an especial manner to France. However various the causes,



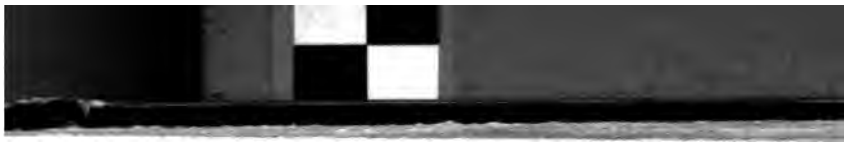
trivial or irrational as they may be, if politically and morally Europe can be said to be one whole, and if one whole, to have a common centre, the instinct of the greater number points for that centre to Paris.

This is precisely one of those questions most likely to be embarrassed by strong prejudice, and on which, from national feeling and from its own great complexity, it is most difficult to preserve a judicial fairness of mind. But no political writer would be worthy of the name who had not thoroughly weighed it with conscientious and patient discrimination. Let us try to correct any personal predilection and antipathy by the calm test of historical fact, and see if there be anything in the ancient position of France to explain or support her modern pretensions. A very simple question seems crucial. Can it be said that if the history of Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire be surveyed as a whole, this history would be so completely eviscerated by the loss of all mention of any other European country as it would be by the loss of that of France? Once blot France out of the historical map, and the history of Europe would become unintelligible. A slight effort of the imagination may assist us to understand the case; and if we can conceive as effaced the very memory of Charlemagne, of the House of Capet and of Bourbon, of the First Crusade, of Louis IX., of Louis XI., of Henry IV., of Richelieu, Colbert, and Louis XIV., of the Convention, the Republic of '92, and of the two Napoleons, we can estimate the relative value of the residuum of European history. The country which for one thousand years has filled this space in the minds of men must have gained a real, if unrecognised, prerogative in the comitia of European nations.

Nor must another great peculiarity of France be overlooked. She is essentially European. Her interests

and policy must necessarily be guided on European bases. Not so exclusively European that she is without points of contact with the other continents, she is still free from the embarrassment and distraction which colonial and maritime interests introduce into general questions. The extra-European interests of England are so enormous that they seldom leave her free to pursue a purely European policy. Russia, in one-half of her vast dominions, is the mistress of mere Asiatics. Neither Prussia nor Austria have any interests beyond their own continent; but they are both so exclusively continental and inland, that it diminishes rather than increases their influence here. France, on the other hand, has enough to connect her with transmarine races, but not enough to disturb her action at home. Whilst England and Russia have wide maritime and Oriental interests, those of France are strictly continental, European, and concentrated.

Yet another consideration, and one of an importance which it is almost impossible to exaggerate. In estimating the moral weight and even the material strength which any nation can bring to the great questions of European politics, nothing is more important than the greater or less degree in which they are chargeable with national oppression, and the character for moderation and unselfishness which they possess. Let us read the protocols of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, and contrast the moral weight of Count Buol with that of Count Cavour; and even remember the moral power of England at the Congress of Vienna, which her unselfish, though mistaken, policy procured her. Of the actual five European Powers, England and France alone are decently free from this fatal weakness. The crimes of the Russian domination in Poland, Finland, and Turkey; of Austrian domination in Galicia, in Hungary, in Venetia; of Prussian



domination in Posen and Denmark,—identify these three Powers with oppression, and colour all their action and their character in Europe.

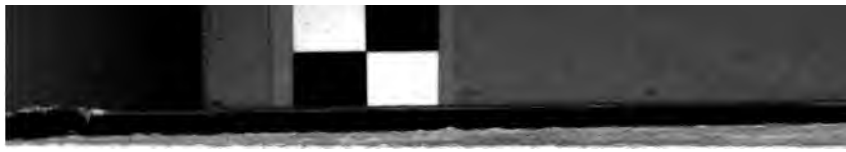
On England herself the memory of her Indian aggressions, subjugations, and revolts, her Asiatic empire, her Chinese, her Japanese, her perennial colonial wars, her maritime pretensions, hang as a dead weight, dragging down her fame. There is but one modern nation which never closes the temple of Janus, and that nation is England. Nor can an old man recall the period at which British soldiers were not engaged in some corner of the world. We esteem ourselves happy if we chance not to be engaged in several. As I write, English soldiers are in the field in four distinct wars of race in as many great divisions of the globe. To us a source of pride as well as a supposed means of gain, these ceaseless foreign expeditions damage our honour in Europe as much as they disturb and weaken our policy.

We have, too, our special weakness. Blinded by long habit, and conscious of at least good intentions in these latter years, the English nation forgets its position in Ireland, as that of a dominant race still hated by a subjugated nation, still alien in religion, manners, and traditions, and loaded by the memory of seven centuries of selfish misgovernment. We jest almost at the thought of being ourselves national oppressors at home, and for the moment our confidence is just. But Europe has not learned the difference between our government in Ireland now and our government as it has been for seven centuries; and the oppressors of the Magyar, the Venetian, and the Pole can still point biting retorts at the perplexed rulers of the Irish Kelt.

France in Europe is almost free from any similar weakness. Her occupation of Rome is a special and

complex case, which, with all its evils, is yet in its nature temporary, and not in its form oppressive. Her aggressions and domination in Algeria form a fatal wound in her side, less damaging to her than our own Oriental and maritime oppression, because neither so incessant nor so colossal, and not so injurious to mankind, not flung broadcast over the earth. This great wrong and cause of wrong, this grand national blunder, this wretched military and dynastic caprice, once repressed and undone, the case of France as an aggressor, but for Nice, stands almost clear. As it is (and this is for opinion almost everything) France is the only one of the five Great Powers which, neither by alien domination nor imperfect incorporation, oppresses, insults, or misgoverns any one of the races of Europe; which has neither a Warsaw, a Hungary, a Venetia, nor a Posen, neither a Gibraltar nor an Ireland (written in 1864).

It is but a corollary of this which appears in her wonderful national cohesion and unity. France may be said to be the only perfectly homogeneous nation in Europe. Russia with her cancer in Poland, Austria with her wen in Hungary, stand at one end of the scale; France stands at the other. The Spanish and the Italian populations are both cohesive in a high degree; but the unity of neither is equal to that of France. The Piedmontese and the Neapolitan have not yet learned to feel as the children of one fatherland; the Moor, the Goth, and the Kelt in Spain are not yet wholly amalgamated. Prussia with her patchwork of duchies; Austria with her hostile races; little Switzerland with her trilingual feuds; even England with her Irish difficulties,—can none of them pretend to the complete fusion, the organic unity, the intense concentration which binds together as one man the forty millions of the French race.



But there is another consideration of a very different kind, which, were all the preceding conditions different from what they are, would suffice to mark off France as possessing a special function in Europe. In France is found the origin, the centre, and the impulse of that Revolution which is as truly European as it is French. This is not the place to analyse or discuss this great historical movement; it is sufficient for our purpose that it is an axiom acknowledged by all competent inquirers, that this Revolution is at once the issue of the past and the cradle of the future civilisation of Europe; that France is but the scene of its acute crisis, the centre from which it is destined to radiate through the European system.

The thorough comprehension of this, the key of all modern history, is the first and indispensable qualification for a statesman; and the vacillations and helplessness of the politicians of the old school are mainly due to the fact that they attempt to deal with the problems of Europe whilst ignoring the first conditions of their solution. To officials bred up in the purblind doctrines of Pitt and Castlereagh the French Revolution may appear as a mere national rebellion, once big with portents and horrors, but long since crushed or exhausted. It is time that politicians saw it, as historical students see it, to be a real regeneration of modern society, of which as yet nothing but the initial convulsions are past, and in which as yet but one people has fully participated.

That Revolution in its political aspect implies the abolition of every form of hereditary government, whether resting on force, tradition, class, or caste, and the substitution for it of a government of personal fitness, actively recognised by the governed, and maintained by them in the sole interest of the common social progress. This involves the gradual extinction



of all modes of political rule derived from birth, of the hereditary principle in all its phases, whether monarchic, feudal, or industrial, and the resettlement of the state system on national and geographical bases. It implies in its social aspect the extinction of the arbitrary classification according to the aristocratic hierarchy, and the substitution of the natural classification of personal merit. In its moral aspect it implies the subjection of individual propensities to a recognised code of social duty. In the intellectual aspect it implies a common system of belief, resting on free and accepted demonstration, and the maintenance of that faith by an organised system of education.

This conception, as a whole, of a regenerated social existence has penetrated in a general way France alone among the nations, and even her but incompletely. Yet no unpledged observer doubts the degree to which it has modified the others, and the certainty of its ultimate establishment in all. Those who watch events from the ground of history rather than party can see in the spasm which shook Europe in 1830; in the revolutions which convulsed it in 1848; in the revulsion of public opinion since the close of the great war which separates us as by a gulf from the ideas of Alexander, Pitt, and Metternich; in the resurrection of Italy as a nation; in the revival of Spain; in the unrest within the German principalities; in the mode in which the movements and ideas of Europe react on our own home politics and thoughts, and still more on those of others; in the subterranean surging of the revolutionary forces from Glasgow to Naples, from Warsaw to Madrid,—the sure signs of this stupendous movement, its might, and its centre-point. And a politician is distinctly disqualified for his task who ignores the importance of this principle in all political questions whatever, or ignores the

truth that France is at once its embodiment and its apostle.

It results from all the preceding considerations—from her geographical position, from her military, naval, and industrial renown, from her language, history, literature, and general prestige, from the spontaneous adoption of her ideas, tone, and aims, but chiefly from her being the centre of the great movement—that France possesses a priority or initiative in the progressive civilisation of Europe, very difficult to define with exactness, but which cannot be gainsaid. In a subject like this, nothing can be less in place than puerile comparisons between nations; but only the shallowest vanity can prevent us from determining the relative duties of each nation. England and France, like the rest, have each their parts; and neither would be competent to fulfil the office of the other. No thoughtful reader will see in this statement any crude classification of nations, or the affectation of adjudging absolute inferiority or superiority to any. All that is here implied by the initiative of France is the truth visible in present facts, and naturally to be expected from the survey of the past, that most of the ideas which move modern society are first or most strongly enunciated in France; and, on the other hand, that what the French people proclaim is received, on the whole, with the largest share of attention by the rest of Europe.

A statement so simple and so like a truism can scarcely awaken the most sensitive self-love; and Englishmen may explain it as they please, but they can hardly venture to deny it. It amounts to little more than to say that principles adopted in France are expressed in a form and language and with an energy which are most favourable to their dissemination; and, on the other hand, that no people in Europe have so

immediate a machinery for carrying their ideas amongst others. The people who within the last one hundred years succeeded in pouring their victorious armies over five countries of Europe simultaneously, and raised an empire (in a measure an empire of ideas) co-extensive with the western half of the Continent, have earned for any policy that they espouse a very special interest. And the country which represents the greatest number of the interests of modern European nations, and whose movements are most rapidly felt by the greatest number of those nations; which possesses the most numerous relations with them, and stands most nearly in an intermediate position in the antagonisms which agitate them,—is naturally that country the action of which most powerfully determines that of the rest. That country is obviously France; and if we attribute a distinct initiative in Europe to her, it is but to resume the familiar notion that in the public questions of Europe the attitude of France is awaited as of critical importance.

IV

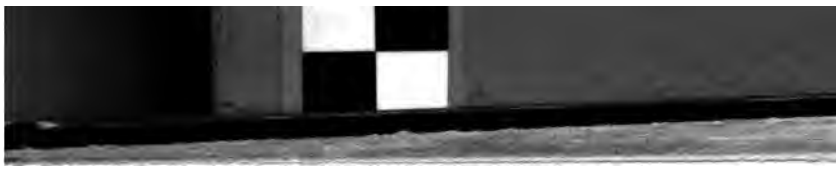
So far from France and England having been natural antagonists, so far from enmity or even rivalry having been their normal condition, they have been, in the higher sense of political sympathies, inseparable colleagues and natural allies. The greater rulers of both countries have systematically encouraged friendship between them. From the Middle Ages down to the Coalition against the Revolution of 1793, the two countries have never been engaged in any obstinate and ineradicable antagonism of policy, except when all Northern Europe was banded to crush the headlong

ambition of Louis XIV. It may be said, if we except this period, that England has never exercised any influence in Europe at once commanding and beneficent, unless she has been acting in concert with France. The very notion of the natural antipathy and contrast between ourselves and our neighbours is a remnant only of the retrograde passions which inspired the Coalition of Pitt. To speak of France as a natural antagonist is the part of men whose views of statecraft are drawn from the later ravings of Burke, to whom history has no lessons earlier than Marlborough. Calmer reasoning and broader knowledge bring us to the very opposite belief. And if the decade 1855-65 did much to extinguish these irrational prejudices, it is due not to the Napoleons or Palmerstons, nor even to commercial treaties and Oriental alliances, but to the fact that the calming of the revolutionary movement in France has coincided with its progress in England; that as the area of its influence has been widened, the violence of its action has been reduced; and France and England have been drawn together in their natural task of co-ordinating the progress of Europe.

It has been growing up as a maxim with a certain vigorous and honest body of politicians, that the true policy of a country like England is to withdraw almost entirely from diplomatic or national action in any state of Europe; that her sole duty is to be friendly with all, to have alliances and even relations with none. That such a paradox should have obtained any support, that it should have seduced the most conscientious and sagacious of our public men, is a singular proof of the disorganisation of all political doctrines. Nothing but the aimless meddling into which our former diplomacy degenerated can explain such a blunder in men of the high moral and intellectual vigour of Mr. Cobden and

Mr. Bright. Seeing, as they do, that in the hands of aristocratic statesmen of the old school political action on the Continent ends in little but spiritless meddling, without vigour, system, or principle, they might well be forgiven for believing that no end can be put to such a course but by a period of rest and abstinence.

But for any end less temporary a real and systematic foreign policy is absolutely essential; and the only effectual mode of closing the era of weak and restless intervention is to substitute for it a system of definite action. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright have been deceiving themselves, or are deceived. They have been in this but the mouthpiece of a party to which they are themselves immeasurably superior. Their own objects and motives have done honour to their genius; but the real scheme of the apostles of peace and non-intervention at any cost is to make national well-being consist in the unrestricted development of individual industry. Free trade, peace, commerce, industry, are with them the ends, not the means, of public prosperity. The happiness of nations does not consist, any more than that of men, in the free accumulation of capital. Growing rich is to a people just what it is to a man. Civilisation means a great deal more than labour, and more than material wealth and industrial cultivation. It means the uniform education of the human powers, whether in communities or in man; and of these the social and generous instincts are the highest. It implies an intricate social union; control, government, and association; it cannot exist without mutual support, trust, and co-operation; the protection of the weak by the strong; the subordination of the unwise to the wise; the combination of all in common duties; the sacrifice of many personal desires; the willingness to bear the common burdens.

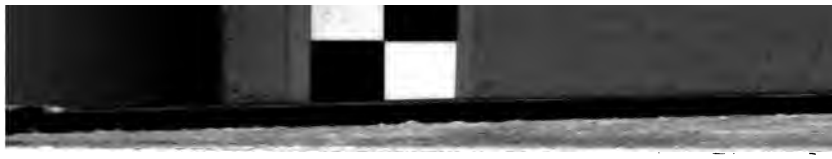


These trite maxims of common morality, which, whatever we may practise, all of us recognise in private life, yet require to be repeated when we deal with public and national concerns. As applied to the members of a nation, no one gainsays or misconceives these familiar truths. The blindest votary of the new doctrines does not propose as a panacea for our public difficulties that every man should confine himself to the affairs of his own county, his own city, or his own parish. Pushed to its extreme, the total disregard of all social interests is admitted to be the meanest form of selfishness. But if citizens have national duties, they have, for just the same reasons, international duties as well. There is nothing mysterious about the aggregate we call a nation. The aggregate which forms the state system of Europe is just as real, and if it is somewhat less definite, it is in some points of view decidedly more important. The progress of civilisation for us depends ultimately and, in the long-run, even more upon the state of Europe than on the state of any particular nation. The moral, intellectual, and industrial growth of England, speaking in the highest sense, is determined by that of the West as a whole. If by moral growth we mean a wiser and more generous public opinion; by intellectual growth, the more systematic cultivation of the whole mental powers; by industrial growth, not the mere accretion of capital, but a happier organisation of labour (and no lower estimate is worthy of thinker, politician, or citizen),—then we may be sure that the progress of our people in these things is never very far removed from the progress of the people around us.

From the other nations of Europe we draw the raw stuff of our civilisation, material, scientific, and educational. Thought is absolutely common to us all. The highest scientific and philosophical truths

which ultimately form our intellectual standards, and without which even manufactures would stand still, come to us in far larger proportion from across the seas than from this island. We carry abroad freer conceptions of commerce, and we benefit by the lessons we have taught. We come back with teaching on the condition of the labourer, and we profit profoundly by our study. The political affinities are no less powerful. Good government amongst our neighbours is a dangerous example for bad government at home. The triumph of progress and freedom there gives new life to our political activity. Nor is this less true of the other nations in their turn than it is of ourselves. This intercommunion of tone, aims, and ideas permeates all alike. If Englishmen have the closest relations with their neighbours in Europe, scientific, educational, moral, industrial, and social, they cannot avoid having political relations also.

Civilisation is a very complex whole. A healthy political condition is one of its indispensable conditions, as of all living men our two popular leaders have most earnestly maintained. A diseased political state will arrest and distort for a time every other kind of development. Industry is but a side of the work of civilisation, and it is just that side of it which convulsion or syncope of the political organism can most effectually damage. The regeneration of European society, the working out of the people to a better state, a time of peaceful union, industrial organisation, and universal education—for this is the true meaning of the great Revolution—is a movement eminently European, and not national or local. But one of its first conditions, one of its most important results, is that of political regeneration and national resettlement. And this is no less European than the still wider movement of which it is but a part. Each nation is



interested alike in the good government of all. Without it peace, commerce, and progress are impossible. Each nation also can do much to promote it. But the mode in which it alone can do so systematically and effectually is by generous and resolute co-operation in the common councils of all. Few nations can with advantage interfere in the separate affairs of a neighbour; but all together, and that by means no less peaceful than efficient, can give the most powerful impulse to good government in any, and can certainly guarantee it from interference from without.

It would not be difficult to show that on purely economic grounds the consequences of national isolation would prove most disastrous. Liberals complain—and most justly—of the enormous growth of our military and naval expenditure. Fortifications and engineering experiments are favourite resources to gain popularity for a minister or a party; but to make any grand reduction in our armaments whilst France and the rest of Europe are still armed to the teeth, is a plan to which no tongue whatever can persuade our people to submit. But the armaments of France are directed not so much against us as against Continental Powers. The army of France is kept on foot chiefly by the armies of Germany. These exist because Italy, Poland, and Hungary at any moment may renew the effort for national existence. The House of Austria is still involuntarily, as in the days of Henry, the source of the uneasiness of Europe (1864). It has no further function in Europe, and retards and disturbs its progress. The army of Austria, again, is the cause, but not the excuse, of the army of Prussia.

Prussia, uneasy for her empire, watches with mingled dread and hope the political throes of the German Powers. Each petty sovereign keeps up his army from old feudal pride and conscious insecurity.

But another and even more powerful cause remains. Outside this German frontier, beyond the pale of Western civilisation, the enormous hordes of the Russian despot stand for ever under arms. Germany, which for political reasons distrusts the West, for military reasons must turn with defiance to the East. Thus the great Continental armies exist, and will exist until the political ulcers are excised, and until union gives Europe strength to disregard the Oriental legions of Russia.

Agreement between France and England could do much, and much at once, to mitigate this evil of "militarism" (as Garibaldi, the noblest soldier of our age, has called it), which drains and poisons our industrial energy. But nothing can well suppress it except the one remedy of political resettlement. Whilst Russia, revolution, and nationalities alternately threaten Germany, she will have her million and a half of bayonets on foot. Whilst she has these, France will have her half million, and England her quarter million. The evil is not with us two so much as with the retrograde Powers of the East. It springs not so much of aristocratic misgovernment or monarchic pride as of a chronic political unrest. To end this alone is to pass from a military to an industrial epoch. To mitigate its convulsions, to moderate its violence, is to do much to neutralise its evils, immediate and remote. When Europe is settled politically and nationally, her armies will be disbanded, but not till then; and only as we co-operate in obtaining for her and for ourselves this political and national resettlement—a state which shall at once be order and progress—can we approach the time when the British nation will consent, even if it previously were able, to cut off the scandalous profusion of our military expenditure.

Now whilst entire apathy to the political movement



of Europe is felt by all but a few fanatics to be a course as degrading as it is extravagant, there is still cherished by a certain school the idea of founding a system of complete neutrality. That idea is that, whatever relations with foreign countries England is to maintain, they are never to exceed a passive goodwill and a studied impartiality. The commerce of all nations should be welcomed in her ports, as the ports of all nations should be opened to her commerce. An interchange of capital, the intercourse of the citizens, the exchange of products, and international exhibitions, should give what is wanting of noble to this bond of material interest. Each bale of goods, cries the able financier, comes bearing a message of friendship. Such a view as this, if meant for a political principle, savours either of the cant of the rhetorician or the pettiness of the tradesman. That commercial can override political questions permanently is an idea to which no one with the instinct of a statesman could yield.

The buying and selling of articles amongst the people of a nation does not necessarily involve the fusion of all classes and the extinction of all political struggles. No one can regard the history of Europe and its present condition in the light of such a sketch as has preceded, without recognising in it as a whole the unity and method of a state system, and the great scale of the forces with which that system is charged. Compared to them, the crude motive of mercantile profit (which has been the stimulus often of the most selfish and ruinous extravagances) is indeed uncertain and futile. In international precisely as in national movements those who take part must stand on definite political principles, and take some definite attitude towards the great ideas or social changes which are at stake. Human society, on the largest as on the

smallest scale, is far too complex and noble to be reduced to the measure of any market whatever; and it is as absurd to look for the solution of all political questions in Europe, even by the advent of a Millennium of Free Trade, as it would be to hope to quell a revolution at home by a reduction of discount.

Real neutrality in all European movements being practically impossible for this country, let us examine some of the chief political relations which have been advocated or pursued. In that absence of any intelligible principle—which has so long marked our vacillating policy—almost every possible alliance has been tried or recommended by ministries and parties. It was even once the idea of a school of half-hearted reactionists to associate ourselves in an intimate manner with Russia. An alliance with Turkey or China would be hardly more absurd. As Russia differs from England in every social, political, and historical condition (to say nothing of her being outside the state system of Europe), to associate our policy with hers is simply to appeal to the old method of material force, and to retire ostentatiously from the field of opinion, progress, and moral weight. The party which regards Russia as anything but as a Power whose ambition must be watched whilst its barbarism must be educated, is at once unfit to bear rule or give counsel in a free and advancing nation.

An alliance with Prussia, or even North Germany, which has been occasionally suggested, must appear, at any rate in the light of recent events, as an alliance which leaves simply out of the question the whole of the Catholic revolutionary and democratic forces of the Continent. It would offer none of the stability and strength of the Russian alliance, whilst it shares in part many of its evils. The same reasoning applies just as forcibly, and, in spite of the traditions of an



effete school, is far more applicable to the Austrian alliance—that with the South rather than the North of Germany. Indeed, so hopelessly is the empire in its present form doomed to extinction, so thoroughly identified is it with all that remains of reactionary in Europe, that to identify our policy with hers, even in subordinate matters, is to look to secure the stability and progress of Europe by identifying ourselves with the interests of its most rotten element. The voice of all that is reasonable and liberal in England has been for a generation so loudly pronounced against this remnant of our worst system of blundering, that it is as little worth discussing an alliance with South Germany as with North Germany. A united Germany, as a political unit, of all the German speaking peoples, "the Pan-Germanic idea," is as yet a professor's dream (1864).

An alliance or permanent relations with any of the other European Powers need hardly detain us for consideration. Any one or more of these smaller nations, however proper to receive our friendship and help, cannot seriously be proposed as a basis of combination. A continental policy for England obviously implies relations with one of the first-rate Powers. There is, however, another alternative. There remains to be considered another political connection, which at first sight offers far more than any of those which have been considered, and is vigorously advocated by a powerful and able party. The creed of the only political school of growing importance is an intimate alliance with America—an alliance at once political, social, and material,—or in its full form a combination of the entire Anglo-Saxon race. By this would be implied a close identification of interest, and a combined action of all the races of the globe which speak the English tongue. The conception has a solid

truth at its base, and is a fruitful and intelligible principle. There can be no doubt that such a moral union would be a very desirable, a very feasible, and a very pregnant consummation. It would lead to great and valuable political ends. It would certainly represent an enormous force, material as well as moral, and a vast expansion of industrial life.

For all this, however, it is not, and can never be, a cardinal political idea. An Anglo-Saxon alliance, however intimate and however powerful, never can reach to the level of the true European questions. It is not a harmony or balance of elements and interests, it is simply the augmentation of one. With all the points of difference, the Anglo-Saxon race is, for all European purposes, virtually one. It represents one set of ideas, of political forces and affinities. The whole of the elements represented by France still remain outside of it. Anglo-Saxonism is, after all, an idea, like that of Panslavism, Teutonism, or the Latin race; an idea which has a real basis, but is exaggerated into absurdity. It is only a variety of national egoism. Anglo-Saxondom will, and even now does, represent a preponderating material force; but as a key of human progress it is a vaunt or an imposture. There would remain outside of it, and without defined relation to it, the whole of those problems of the European state system with which the Continent is big.

The reorganisation of Germany, the repression of Russia, the revival of Italy and Spain, the resettlement of Europe, the grand political and social crises of France, the bulk, in fact, of the intellectual, social, and practical movements of Europe, would be things at which the Saxon union would look on, but which it would not be vitally concerned in or able essentially to modify. Looking at the region of ideas and the moral forces of nations, it would bring England little



nearer to the real life of the West. No one but a man driven crazy by national vanity could suppose that the true solution of all European difficulties would be at once obtained, if England were suddenly doubled in population, wealth, and energy. And speaking in the light of European progress as a whole, the coalition of America and England would do little more than this. America is, after all, another self, freed happily from many of the burdens of its parent, but devoid also of much of its laborious education in civilisation. America, like England, has her place—a great and a noble part—amongst the heads of human progress; but that part is as the colleague and counterpart of England. The function of each is not the complement of the other. And it is only an age infatuated with material success which can claim for the material development of America an influence on the destinies of Europe akin to that which eight centuries of effort and of growth, their European position, relations, and traditions have given to the Anglo-Saxon people of this island.

In point of fact, the union of America with England, such as it is conceived by the economic school of politicians, would be by itself rather a curse than a blessing to the rest of the human family. Valuable as that union would be when subordinated to greater political relations and fixed international duties, a mere league of the two branches of the English race, to push their settlements, their trade, and their influence to indefinite limits, would indeed be a formidable bar to human progress. It would mean England practically withdrawn from all her legitimate duties in Europe; for her enormous power would be the principal menace to the combined nations, whilst it gave her but small means of controlling them. It would mean political progress

drowned in the torrent of industrial expansion. It would mean a maritime supremacy ten times more tyrannical and galling than of old; more empires founded in the East; more races of dark men sacrificed to the pitiless genius of Free Trade, and at the blood-stained altar of colonial extension. It would mean the subversion of ancient kingdoms, the demoralisation of primitive societies, the extermination of unoffending races. If the great national shame and danger, which it behoves every patriotic Englishman to avert, be, as I solemnly believe it to be, the growth of mercantile injustice in our empire, this shame and danger would be largely increased were England to gain at once an enormous increase of power and a stimulus to her material lusts. America thus would add to her impunity whilst encouraging her vices. Valuable as Anglo-Saxonism is as part of a wider system of political combinations, to substitute it by itself for such a system would be the surest road to national decline.

By this method of logical exhaustion we come back, therefore, to the only possible and rational basis of English policy—a close understanding with France. It is easy to see how natural and solid such a policy is—paramount in its advantages not in one respect, but in all respects. In the first place, whilst it is most true that the Western Powers form a system of themselves, it has been shown to be no less obvious that there is in this system a certain dualism, and that of this dualism France and England are the foremost representatives. As far the most powerful of the actual European nations, as far the most advanced, as far the most stable, these two nations form, for the moment, an order by themselves. However desirable it may be that the state system, which is even now morally one, should become politically one or legally



consolidated, it would be utopian to expect common European action, or even standing European councils or congresses, for many a generation. In the meantime a settled understanding and a healthy co-operation between England and France is possible, and may well represent and do duty for the other. Nor is this simply a vision of the future.

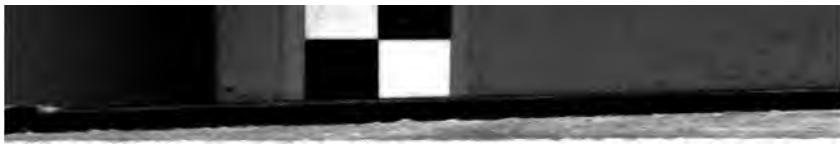
When the two Western Powers allied themselves to defend Constantinople and Eastern Europe from the Tartar, in spite of the indecision and incompleteness of their action, in spite of the selfish aims and the petty intrigues from which neither was free, in spite of the opposition and alarm of Germany,—it was felt that the Crimean War was an undertaking in the name and interest of Europe, which could only be closed by a European conference, and which opened a new European epoch. Secondly, the extreme diversity of England and France enables them together fairly to represent and to harmonise the principal elements of European society. In the next place, their interests are so far different, and yet so far from antagonistic, that any common course which they take cannot be far from the interests of the rest of Europe. France can never abet England to establish a tyranny outside of Europe; nor could England abet France in establishing one within it.

Now what is here meant is not an *alliance* with France, nor mere friendliness towards France, much less flattery of the actual rulers of France,—rather a well-considered agreement with the French nation upon the main features of their joint policy. It would be quite possible for the directors of the two nations, if at all worthy of the name, to lay down broad paths of action on all the chief European questions, which should duly satisfy the interests of both, strengthen the moral and the material position

of both, and yet awaken none of the jealousies of their neighbours. It need scarcely be said that such an agreement, prepared as a whole and honestly proclaimed, could not possibly comprise schemes prejudicial to the other Powers, or referring exclusively to the selfish interests of either. Neither could have the smallest interest to assist the other in aggression, spoliation, or tyranny. Nor could they agree for mutual aid to such ends; for each would feel even more indignation in such a scheme in the other than it would feel satisfaction in being abetted in such a scheme itself.

The various projects of national aggrandisement justly and unjustly attributed to France would one and all be distinctly repudiated and provided against. England on her part must surrender and disclaim the actual or the imputed wrongs against the rights of her neighbours with which she is charged,—be it Gibraltar, be it Malta, be it the empire of the seas or imperial arrogance. It would be easy for both nations to give up these objects of vulgar ambition or irrational pride in exchange for greater and more lasting objects of national glory. That in this stage of civilisation they still disturb the ideas and the acts of two great nations is due chiefly to the utter state of disorganisation to which the European state system is reduced, and to the rebuffs which the better hopes and efforts of each so continually meet from the other. The failure of these is due, however, mainly to this, that England and France are constantly engaged in carrying out a policy without the aid of, occasionally in spite of the opposition of, the other.

The great fact of a permanent understanding between England and France, when once distinctly proclaimed, would alone suffice to achieve or prepare most of its happiest results. So soon as it was really



understood throughout Europe that England and France had definitely concluded a comprehensive agreement on all the greater questions of policy, formally renouncing or abandoning all pretensions odious or menacing to other states, publicly engaging to use their vast resources and their legitimate influence in concert for the general settlement of the state system in the cause equally of order and progress, many of the principal perplexities of the Continent would be in a fair way towards solution at once. The preposterous projects with which desperate reactionists and revolutionists in turn trouble the harmony of the West would be little heard of, when all were aware of a settled determination on the part of the two great heads of Europe that she should be delivered over neither to oppression nor to anarchy, but that the gradual resettlement of states into a new and completer system of liberty should be carried on without recoil and without confusion.

Russia, who has so long traded on the jealousies and intrigues of the West, would at last abandon her long dream of aggression upon Europe. Austria would reconcile herself to treat for Venetia, and prepare herself for her transformed existence. Prussia, that Russia of North Germany, would see that no fresh divisions would enable her to pursue unchecked her ambitious career. Italy would at once feel absolutely guaranteed against the pressure of her friends or the aggressions of her enemies, and would turn to national restoration, relieved from the intrigues which are due to the one, and the military incubus which is caused by the other. Spain would recover her pride, develop her enormous resources, without the necessity of courting the rulers of France, of flouting those of England, and of tyrannising over petty outlying nations. The smaller nations one and all might look

for a real insurance against oppression, and might learn to trust to opinion instead of to intrigue. The partisans of the old system, their cause visibly lost, would learn resignation. The partisans of the new, their cause taken out of their hands, would learn patience. Peace, trade, and civilisation would gain, not by commercial treaties, but by a healthier political atmosphere. Who shall gainsay that such results do not incomparably transcend the vulgar and shifting objects of ambition which each Power in its isolation now alternately pursues?

Postscript, June 1908. — The foregoing Essay, written in 1864, was published in 1866 in *International Policy*, a joint volume of seven "Essays on the Foreign Relations of England" (Chapman and Hall, 8vo—second edition, 1884, 12mo). It will be remembered that it was composed between the Crimean War and the Franco-German War, at a time when the German Empire did not exist, and Prussia was but the leading State of North Germany; when Austria dominated Italy, and oppressed Hungary; when France occupied Rome. After forty-four years I reissue it in the year of European *ententes*, to which I looked forward not in vain.



II

THE FUTURE OF WOMAN

THE system of thought on which this entire series of Essays is based seeks to moralise and to spiritualise the great institutions of society—not to revolutionise or to materialise them. In nothing is this character more conspicuous than in its teaching as to the social Future of Woman. It is intensely conservative as to the distinctive quality with which civilisation has ever invested women, whilst it is ardently progressive in its aim to purify and spiritualise the social function of women. It holds firmly the middle ground between the base apathy which is satisfied with the actual condition of woman as it is, and the restless materialism which would assimilate, as far as possible, the distinctive functions of women to those of men, which would "equalise the sexes" in the spirit of justice, as they phrase it, and would pulverise the social groups of families, sexes, and professions into individuals organised, if at all, by unlimited resort to the ballot-box. Herein we are truly conservative in holding society to be made up of *families*, not of individuals, and in developing, not in annihilating, the differences of sex, age, and relation between individuals.

But first, let us get rid of the unworthy suspicion that we are content with the condition of women as

we see it, even in the advanced populations of the West to-day. As M. Laffitte has so well put it, the "test of civilisation is the place which it assigns to women." In a rudimentary state we find women treated with brutal oppression, little better than slaves or beasts of burden, where the conditions of existence make such tasks almost a cruel necessity for all. In many societies of a high civilisation, from the point of view of intellectual activity or military organisation, the condition of women is often found to be one of seclusion, neglect, or humiliation, moral, physical, and intellectual. Even to-day, under the most favourable conditions—conditions, perhaps, more often found in some sections of the labouring classes of cities rather than amongst the spoiled daughters of wealth and power,—it is shocking to see how backward is the education of women as a sex, how much their lives are overburdened by labour, anxiety, and unwomanly fatigues, by frivolous excitement and undue domestic responsibility, by the fever of public ambitions and cynical defiance of all womanly ideals.

No! we can never rest satisfied with the current prejudice that assigns to women, even to those with ample leisure and resources, an education different in kind and degree and avowedly inferior to that of men, which supposes that even a superior education for girls should be limited to a moderate knowledge of a few modern languages, and a few elegant accomplishments. This truly Mahometan or Hindoo view of woman's education is no longer openly avowed by cultured people of our own generation. But it is too obviously still the practice in fact throughout the whole Western world, even for nine-tenths of the rich. And as to the education which is officially provided for the poor, it is in this country, at least, almost too slight to deserve the name at all. For this most dreadful



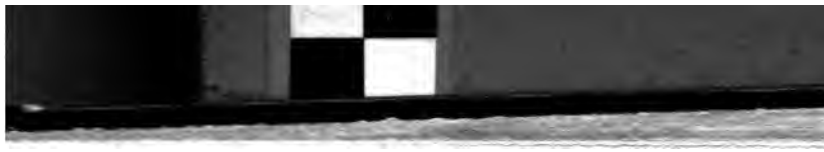
neglect let us call aloud for radical relief. We call aloud for an education for women in the same line as that of men, to be given by the same teachers, and covering the same ground, though not at all necessarily to be worked out in common or in the same form and with the same practical detail. It must be an education, essentially in scientific basis the same as that of men, conducted by the same, and those the best attainable, instructors—an education certainly not inferior, rather superior to that of men, inasmuch as it can easily be freed from the drudgery incidental to the practice of special trades, and also because it is adapted to the more sympathetic, more alert, more tractable, more imaginative intelligence of women.

So, also, we look to the good feeling of the future to relieve women from the agonising wear and tear of families far too large to be reared by one mother—a burden which crushes down the best years of life for so many mothers, sisters, and daughters—a burden which, whilst it exists, makes all expectation of superior education or greater moral elevation in the masses of women mere idle talk—a burden which would never be borne at all, were it not that the cry of the market for more child labour produces an artificial bounty on excessively large families. And to the future we look to set women free from the crushing factory labour which is the real slave-trade of the Nineteenth Century, one of the most retrograde changes in social order ever made since Feudalism and Church together extinguished the slavery of the ancient world. In many ways this slavery of modern Industrialism is quite as demoralising to men and women, and in some ways as injurious to society, as ever was the mitigated slavery of the Roman Empire, though its evils are not quite so startling and so cruel.

These are the wants which, in our eyes, press with

greatest urgency on the condition of women, and not their admission to all the severe labours and engrossing professions of men, the assimilation of the life of women to the life of men, and especially to a share in all public duties and privileges. The root of the matter is that the social function of women is essentially and increasingly different from that of men. What is this function? It is personal, direct, domestic; working rather through sympathy than through action, equally intellectual as that of men, but acting more through the imagination, and less through logic. We start from this—neither exaggerating the difference, nor denying it, but resting in the organic difference between woman and man. It is proved by all sound biology, by the biology both of man and of the entire animal series. It is proved also by the history of civilisation, and the entire course of human evolution. It is brought home to us every hour of the day, by the instinctive practice of every family. And it is illustrated and idealised by the noblest poetry of the world, whether it be the great epics of the past or the sum of modern romance.

It is a difference of nature, I say, an organic difference, alike in body, in mind, in feeling, and in character—a difference which it is the part of evolution to develop and not to destroy, as it is always the part of evolution to develop organic differences and not to produce their artificial assimilation. A difference, I have said; but not a scale of superiority or inferiority. No theory more than ours repudiates the brutal egoism of past ages, and of too many present men of the world, which classes women as the inferiors of men, and the cheap sophistry of the vicious and the overbearing that the part of women in the life of humanity is a lower, a less intellectual, or less active part. Such a view is the refuge of coarse



natures and stunted brains. Who can say whether it is nobler to be husband or to be wife, to be mother or to be son? Is it more blessed to love or be loved, to form a character or to write a poem? Enough of these idle conundrums, which are as cynical as they are senseless. Everything depends on how the part is played, how near each one of us comes to the higher ideal—*how* our life is worked out, not whether we be born man or woman, in the first half of the century or in the second. The thing which concerns us is to hold fast by the organic difference implanted by Nature between Man and Woman, in body, in mind, in feeling, and in energy, without any balancing of higher and lower, of better or of worse.

Fully to work out the whole meaning of this difference in all its details, would involve a complete analysis in Anthropology and Ethics, and nothing but the bare heads of the subject can here be noticed. It begins with the difference in physical organisation—the condition, and, no doubt in one sense, the antecedent (I do not say the *cause*) of every other difference. The physical organisation of women differs from that of men in many ways: it is more rapidly matured, and yet, possibly, more *viable* (as the French say), more likely to live, and to live longer; it is more delicate, in all senses of the word, more sympathetic, more elastic, more liable to shock and to change; it is obviously less in weight, in mass, in physical force, but above all in muscular persistence. It is not true to say that the feminine organisation is, on the whole, weaker, because there are certain forms of fatigue, such as those of nursing the sick or the infant, minute care of domestic details, ability to resist the wear and tear of anxiety on the body, in which women certainly at present surpass men.

But there is one feature in the feminine organisa-

tion which, for industrial and political purposes, is more important than all. It is subject to functional interruption absolutely incompatible with the highest forms of continuous pressure. With mothers, this interruption amounts to seasons of prostration during many of the best years of life: with all women (but a small exception not worth considering) it involves some interruption to the maximum working capacity. A perfectly healthy man works from childhood to old age, marries and brings up a family of children, without knowing one hour of any one day when he was not "quite fit." No woman could say the same; and of course no mother could deny that, for months she had been a simple invalid. Now, for all the really severe strains of industrial, professional, and public careers, the first condition of success is the power to endure long continuous pressure at the highest point, without the risk of sudden collapse, even for an hour.

Supposing all other forces equal, it is just the five per cent of periodical unfitness which makes the whole difference between the working capacity of the sexes. Imagine an army in the field or a fleet at sea composed of women. In the course of nature, on the day of battle or in a storm, a percentage of every regiment and of every crew would be in childbed, and a much larger percentage would be, if not in hospital, below the mark or liable to contract severe disease if subject to the strain of battle or storm. Of course it will be said that civil life is not war, and that mothers are not intended to take part. But all women may become mothers; and though industry, the professions, and politics are not war, they call forth qualities of endurance, readiness, and indomitable vigour quite as truly as war.

Either the theory of opening all occupations to



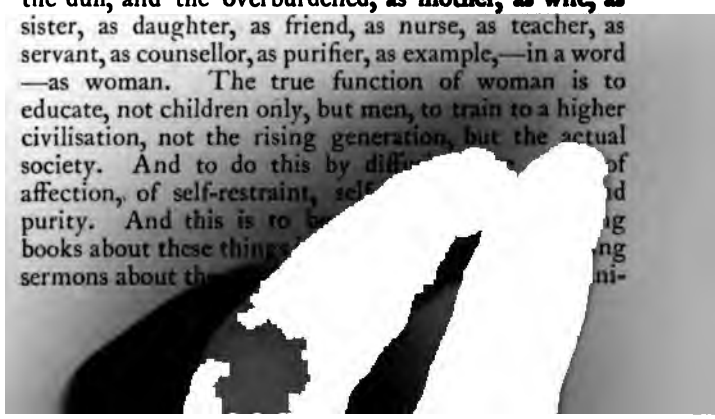
women means opening them to an unsexed minority of women, or it means a diminution and speedy end to the human race, or it means that the severer occupations are to be carried on in a fashion far more desultory and amateurish than ever has yet been known. It is owing to a very natural shrinking from hard facts, and a somewhat misplaced conventionality, that this fundamental point has been kept out of sight, whilst androgynous ignorance has gone about claiming for women a life of toil, pain, and danger, for which every husband, every biologist, every physician, every mother —every true woman—knows that women are, by the law of nature, unfit.

This is, as I said, merely a preliminary part of the question. It is decisive and fundamental, no doubt, and it lies at the root of the matter. It is a plain organic fact, that ought to be treated frankly, and which I have touched on as an incident only but with entire directness. But I feel it to be, after all, a material, and not an intellectual or spiritual ground, and to belong to the lower aspects of the question. We must notice it, for it cannot be disregarded; but it is by no means the heart of the matter. The heart of the matter is the greater power of affection in Woman, or, it is better to say, the greater degree in which the nature of Woman is stimulated and controlled by affection. It is a stigma on our generation that so obvious a commonplace should need one word to support it. Happily there is one trait in humanity which the most cynical sophistry has hardly ventured to belittle—the devotion of the mother to her offspring.

This is the universal and paramount aspect of the matter. For the life of every man or woman now alive, or that ever lived, has depended on the mother's love, or that of some woman who played a mother's part.

It is a fact so transcendent that we are wont to call it an animal instinct. It is, however, the central and most perfect form of human feeling. It is possessed by all women: it is the dominant instinct of all women; it possesses women, whether mothers or not, from the cradle to the grave. The most degraded woman is in this superior to the most heroic man (abnormal cases apart). It is the earliest, most organic, most universal of all the innate forces of mankind. And it still remains the supreme glory of Humanity. In this central feature of human nature, Women are always and everywhere incontestably pre-eminent. And round this central feature of human nature, all human civilisation is, and ought to be organised, and to perfecting it all human institutions do, and ought to converge.

I am very far from limiting this glorious part of maternity in woman to the breeding and nurture of infants; nor do I mean to concentrate civilisation on the propagation of the human species. I have taken the mother's care for the infant as the most conspicuous and fundamental part of the whole. But this is simply a type of the affection which in all its forms woman is perpetually offering to man and to woman —to the weak, the suffering, the careworn, the vicious, the dull, and the overburdened, as mother, as wife, as sister, as daughter, as friend, as nurse, as teacher, as servant, as counsellor, as purifier, as example,—in a word —as woman. The true function of woman is to educate, not children only, but men, to train to a higher civilisation, not the rising generation, but the actual society. And to do this by di[illegible] of affection, of self-restraint, self[illegible] d purity. And this is to [illegible] g books about these thing[illegible] ng sermons about th[illegible] ni-



festing them hour by hour in each home by the magic of the voice, look, word, and all the incommunicable graces of woman's tenderness.

All this has become so completely a commonplace that the very repeating it sounds almost like a jest. But it has to be repeated now that coarse sophistry has begun, not only to forget it, but to deny it. And we will repeat it; for we have nothing to add to all that has been said on this cardinal fact of human nature by poets, from Homer to Tennyson, by moralists and preachers, by common sense and pure minds, since the world began. We have nothing to add to it save this—which, perhaps, is really important,—that this function of woman, the purifying, spiritualising, humanising of society, by humanising each family and by influencing every husband, father, son, or brother, in daily contact and in unspoken language, is itself the highest of all human functions, and is nobler than anything which art, philosophy, genius, or statesmanship can produce.

The spontaneous and inexhaustible fountain of love, the secret springs whereof are the mystery of womanhood, this is indeed the grand and central difference between the sexes. But the difference of function is quite as real, if less in degree, when we regard the intellect and the character. Plainly, the intellect of woman on the whole is more early mature, more rapid, more delicate, more agile than that of men; more imaginative, more in touch with emotion, more sensitive, more individual, more teachable, whilst it is less capable of prolonged tension, of intense abstraction, of wide range, and of extraordinary complication. It may be that this is resolvable into the obvious fact of smaller cerebral masses and less nervous energy, rather than any inferiority of quality.

The fact remains that no woman has ever [illegible]hed

Aristotle and Archimedes, Shakespeare and Descartes, Raphael and Mozart, or has ever shown even a kindred sum of powers. On the other hand, not one man in ten can compare with the average woman in tact, subtlety of observation, in refinement of mental habit, in rapidity, agility, and sympathetic touch. To ask whether the occasional outbursts of supreme genius in the male sex are higher than the almost universal quickness and fineness of mind in the female sex, is to ask an idle question. To expel either out of human nature would be to arrest civilisation and to plunge us into barbarism. And the earliest steps out of barbarism would have to begin again in each wigwam with the quick observation and the flexible mind, and not with the profound genius.

As with the intellect—so with the powers of action. The character or energy of women is very different from that of men; though here again it is impossible to say which is the superior, and far less easy to make the contrast. Certainly the world has never seen a female Alexander, Julius Cæsar, Charlemagne, or Cromwell. And in mass, endurance, intensity, variety, and majesty of will no women ever approach the greatest men, and no doubt from the same reason, smaller cerebral mass and slighter nervous organisation. Yet in qualities of constant movement, in perseverance, in passive endurance, in rapidity of change, in keenness of pursuit (up to a certain range and within a given time), in adaptability, agility, and elasticity of nature, in industriousness, in love of creating rather than destroying, of being busy rather than idle, of dealing with the minutest surroundings of comfort, grace, and convenience, it is a commonplace to acknowledge women to be our superiors. And if a million housewives do not equal one Cæsar, they no doubt add more to the happiness of their own generation.



We come back to this—that in body, in mind, in feeling, in character, women are by nature designed to play a different part from men. And all these differences combine to point to a part personal not general, domestic not public, working by direct contact not by remote suggestion, through the imagination more than through the reason, by the heart more than by the head. There is in women a like intelligence, activity, passion ; like and co-ordinate, but not identical ; equally valuable, but not equal by measure ; and this all works best in the Home. That is to say, the sphere in which women act at their highest is the Family, and the side where they are strongest is Affection. The sphere where men act at their highest is in public, in industry, in the service of the State ; and the side where men are at their strongest is Activity. Intelligence is common to both, capable in men of more sustained strain, apt in women for more delicate and mobile service. That is to say, the normal and natural work of women is by personal influence within the Home.

All this is so obvious, it has been so completely the universal and instinctive practice of mankind since civilisation began, that to repeat it would be wearisome if the modern spirit of social anarchy were not now eager to throw it all aside. And we have only to repeat the old saws on the matter, together with this —that such a part is the noblest which civilisation can confer, and was never more urgently needed than it is to-day. In accepting it graciously and in filling it worthily, women are placing themselves as a true spiritual force in the vanguard of human evolution, and are performing the holiest and most beautiful of all the duties which Humanity has reserved for her best-beloved children. The source of the outcry we hear for the Emancipation of Women—their

emancipation from their noblest duty—is that in this materialist age men are prone to despise what is pure, lofty, and tender, and to exalt what is coarse, vulgar, and vainglorious.

When we say that we would see the typical work of women centred in her personal influence in the Home, we are not asking for arbitrary and rigid limitations. We are not calling out for any new legislation or urging public opinion to close any womanly employment for women. There are a thousand ways in which the activity of women may be of peculiar value to the community, and many of these necessarily carry women outside their own houses and into more or less public institutions. The practice of the ladies connected with our Church alone would satisfy us how great is the part which women have to play in teaching, in directing moral and social institutions, in organising the higher standard of opinion, in inspiring enthusiasm in young and old. We are heartily with such invaluable work; and we find that modern civilisation offers to women as many careers as it offers to men.

All that we ask is that such work and such careers shall be founded on *womanly* ideals, and shall recognise the essential difference in the social functions of men and of women. We know that in a disorganised condition of society there are terrible accumulations of exceptional and distressing personal hardship. Of course millions of women have, and can have, no husbands; hundreds of thousands have no parents, no brother, no true family. No one pretends that society is without abundant room for unmarried women, and has not a mass of work for women who by circumstances have been deprived of their natural family and are without any normal home. Many of such women we know to be amongst the noblest of their sex, the



very salt of the earth. But their activity still retains its home-like beauty, and is still womanly and not mannish. All that we ask is that women, whether married or unmarried, whether with families of their own or not, shall never cease to feel like women, to work as women should, to make us all feel that they are true women amongst us and not imitation men.

We are not now discussing any practical remedy for a temporary difficulty; we are only seeking to assert a paramount law of human nature. We are defending the principle of the womanliness of woman against the anarchic assertors of the manliness of woman. There is a passionate party of so-called reformers, both men and women, who are crying out for absolute assimilation as a principle; and such is the weakness of politicians and leaders that this coarse and ignorant sophism is becoming a sort of badge of Radical energy and freedom from prejudice. With all practical remedies for admitted social diseases we are ever ready to sympathise. In the name of mercy let us all do our best with the practical dilemmas which society throws up. But let us not attempt to cure them by pulling society down from its foundations and uprooting the very first ideas of social order. Exceptions and painful cases we have by the thousand. Let us struggle to help or to mend them, as exceptions, and not commit the folly of asserting that the exception is the rule.

We all know that there are more women in these kingdoms than men, and not a little perplexity arises therefrom. But since more males are born than females, the inequality is the result of abnormal causes —the emigration, wandering habits, dangerous trades, overwork and intemperance of men. There are other countries, especially across the Ocean, where the men

greatly outnumber the women. It is the first and most urgent duty of society to remedy this social disease, and not to turn society upside down in order to palliate a temporary and a local want. Certainly not, when the so-called remedy can only increase the disease by "debasing the moral currency" and desecrating the noblest duties of woman. Certainly, no reformers whatever can be more eager than we are to do our best to help in any reasonable remedy for our social maladies, be they what they may. But the extent and acuteness of social maladies makes us only more anxious to defend the first principles of human society —and to us none is so sacred as the inherent and inalienable womanliness of all women's work.

The prevalent sophistry calls out for complete freedom to every individual, male or female, and the abolition of all restraints, legal, conventional, or customary, which prevent any adult from living his or her own life at his and her private will. It is specious; but, except in an age of Nihilism, such anarchic cries would never be heard. It involves the destruction of every social institution together. The Family, the State, the Church, the Nation, Industry, social organisation, law, all rest on fixed rules, which are the standing contradiction of this claim of universal personal liberty from restraint. Society implies the control of absolute individual licence; and this is a claim for absolute individual licence. It is perfectly easy to find objections and personal hardship in every example of social institution.

Begin with marriage. Many married people would be happier and, perhaps, more useful, if they could separate at will. *Therefore* (the cry is) let all men and women be always free to live together or apart, when they choose, and as long as they choose, without priests, registrars, law-courts, or scandal. Many



parents are unworthy to bring up their children. *Therefore*, let no parent have any control over his child. Many women would be more at ease and perhaps more able to work in their own way, if they wore men's clothes. And some men, among the old and the delicate, might be more comfortable in skirts. *Therefore*, abolish the foolish restrictions about Male and Female dress. And this our reformers, it seems, are preparing to do. Many men and more women are, at twenty, better fitted to "come of age" than some men at thirty. *Therefore*, let every one "come of age" when he or she thinks fit. Many a man who, through hunger, steals a turnip is an angel of light compared with a millionaire who speculates. *Therefore*, abolish all laws against stealing. Many a foreigner living in England knows far more of politics than most native electors. *Therefore*, abolish all restrictions applying to "aliens" as such.

Many a layman can preach a better sermon than most priests, can cure disease better than some doctors, can argue a case better than certain barristers, could keep deposits better than some bankers, find a thief quicker than most policemen, and drive a "hansom" better than some cabmen. *Therefore*—it is argued—let every man, woman, and child live with whomsoever he or she like, wear breeches or petticoats as he or she prefer, put their vote in a ballot-box whenever they see one at hand, conduct divine service, treat the sick, plead causes, coin money, carry letters, drive cabs, and arrest their neighbours, as they like, and as long as they like, and so far as they can get others to consent. And thus we shall get rid of all personal hardships, all restrictions as to age, sex, and competence, and all public registration; we shall abolish monopolies, male tyranny, and social oppression generally.

The claim for the complete "emancipation" of women stands or falls along with these other examples of emancipation. And the answer to it is the same. The restriction, which in a few cases is needless, hard, even unjust, is of infinite social usefulness in the vast majority of cases, and "to free" the few would be to inflict permanent injury on the mass. To make marriage a mere arrangement of two persons at will would be to introduce a subtle source of misery into every home. To leave women free to go about in men's clothes and men free to adopt women's clothes, would be to introduce unimaginable coarseness, vice, and brutalisation. To leave every one free to fill any public office, with or without public guarantee or professional training, would open the door to continual fraud, imposture, disputes, uncertainty, and confusion. It is to prevent all these evils that monopolies, laws, conventions, registers and other restrictions on personal licence exist. And the first and most fundamental of all these restrictions are those which distinguish the life of women from that of men.

Not very many reformers consciously intend the "emancipation" of women to go as far as this. There is a great deal of playing with the question, more or less honest, more or less serious, as there is much playing with Socialism, Agnosticism, and so forth, by people who perhaps, in their hearts, merely wish to see women more active and better taught, or some of the worst hardships of workmen redressed, or the dogmas of Orthodoxy somewhat relaxed. But when a great social institution is seriously threatened we must deal with the real revolutionists who have a consistent aim and mean what they say. And the real revolutionists aim at the total "emancipation" of women, and by this they mean that law, custom, convention, and public opinion shall leave every adult



woman free to do whatever any adult man is free to do, and without let or reproach, to live in any way, adopt any habit, follow any pursuit, and undertake any duty, public or private, which is open to or reserved to men.

Now I deliberately say that this result would be the most disastrous to human civilisation of any which could afflict it—worse than to return to slavery and Polytheism. If only a small minority of women availed themselves of their "freedom," the beauty of womanliness would be darkened in every home. Just as if but a few married people accepted the legalised liberty of parting by consent, every husband and every wife would feel their married life sensibly precarious and unsettled. There is nothing that I know of but law and convention to hinder a fair percentage of women from becoming active members of Parliament and useful ministers of the Crown, learned professors of Hebrew and anatomy, very fair priests, advocates, surgeons, nay, tailors, joiners, cab-drivers, or soldiers, if they gave their minds to it. The shouting which takes place when a woman passes a good examination, makes a clever speech, manages well an institution, climbs a mountain, or makes a perilous journey of discovery, always struck me as very foolish and most inconsistent. I have so high an opinion of the brains and energy, the courage and resource of women, that I should be indeed surprised if a fair percentage of women could not achieve all in these lines which is expected of the average man. My estimate of women's powers is so real and so great that, if all occupations were entirely open to women, I believe that a great many women would distinguish themselves in all but the highest range, and that, in a corrupted state of public opinion, a very large number of women would waste their lives in struggling after distinction.

Would waste their lives, I say. For they would be striving, with pain and toil and the sacrifice of all true womanly joys, to obtain a lower prize for which they are not best fitted, in lieu of a loftier prize for which they are pre-eminently fit. A lower prize, although possibly one richer in money, in fame, or in power, but essentially a coarser and more material aim. And in an age like this there is too much reason to fear that ambition, and the thirst for gain and supremacy, would tempt into the unnatural competition many a fine and womanly nature. Our daughters continually desire to see their names in newspapers, to display the cheap glories of academic or professional honours, to contemplate their bankers' pass-books in private, and to advertise in public their athletic record.

Let us teach them that this specious agitation must ultimately degrade them, sterilise them, unsex them. The glory of woman is to be tender, loving, pure, inspiring in her home; it is to raise the moral tone of every household, to refine every man with whom, as wife, daughter, sister, or friend, she has intimate converse; to form the young, to stimulate society, to mitigate the harshness and cruelty and vulgarity of life everywhere. And it is no glory to woman to forsake all this and to read for honours with towelled head in a college study, to fight with her own brother for a good "practice," to spend the day in offices and the night in the "House." These things have to be done—and men have to do them; it is their nature. But the other, the higher duties of love, beauty, patience, and compassion, can only be performed by women, and by women only so long as it is recognised to be their true and essential field.

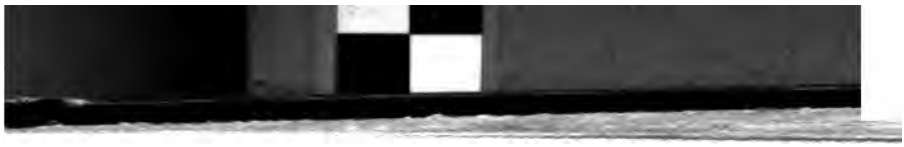
It is impossible to do both together. Women must choose to be either women or abortive men.



They cannot be both women and men. When men and women are once started as competitors in the same fierce race, as rivals and opponents, instead of companions and helpmates, with the same habits, the same ambitions, the same engrossing toil and the same public lives, Woman will have disappeared, society will consist of individuals distinguished physiologically, as are horses or dogs, into male and female specimens. Family will mean groups of men and women who live in common, and Home will mean the place where the group collects for shelter.

The Family is the real social unit, and what society has to do is to promote the good of the Family. And in the Family woman is as completely supreme as is man in the State. And for all moral purposes the Family is more vital, more beautiful, more universal than the State. To keep the Family true, refined, affectionate, faithful, is a grander task than to govern the State; it is a task which needs the whole energies, the entire life of Woman. To mix up her sacred duty with the coarser occupations of politics and trade is to unfit her for it as completely as if a priest were to embark in the business of a money-lender. That such primary social truths were ever forgotten at all is one of the portents of this age of scepticism, mammon-worship, and false glory. Whilst the embers of the older Chivalry and Religion retained their warmth, no decent man, much less woman, could be found to throw ridicule on the chivalrous and saintly ideal of woman as man's guardian angel and queen of the home. But the ideals of Religion of old are grown faint and out of fashion, and the priest of to-day is too often willing to go with the times. Is it to be left to the Religion of Humanity to defend the primeval institutions of society? Let us then honour the old-world image of Woman as being relieved by man

from the harder tasks of industry, from the defence and management of the State, in order that she may set herself to train up each generation to be worthier than the last, and may make each home in some sense a heaven of peace on earth.



III

THE REALM OF WOMAN

An ideal of society would be imperfect if it failed to include the part of *Women*—at least one-half of the aggregate industry of the world.

There can be little doubt that women lead (if anything) even more busy lives than men, and enjoy less prolonged periods of leisure.

The true ideal of women's work and life rests on three leading axioms :—

1. That civilisation tends to differentiate and not to identify the lives of men and women.

2. That the power of women is *moral* not material force.

3. That the material work of the world must fall on *men*.

I. Take the first axiom :—that civilisation tends to increase the true difference between men and women, and not to efface them. The whole question really lies there. A large and very noisy section of the community maintain precisely the contrary — that civilisation is every day making men and women more alike, and that we ought to do everything we can to accelerate and assist this beneficent law of society.

There are some enthusiasts who go so far as to see a glorious future where men and women shall

differ in nothing except in the fact that one sex will be rather physically stronger than the other, that marriage shall impose on the mother some temporary physical disqualifications from which the father is mysteriously exempt; but apart from a certain inferiority in muscular strength, and occasional retirement from public life due to childbirths (neither of which disabilities can perhaps be eliminated within any reasonable period of time), men and women are to be assimilated—in occupation, duties, rights, mode of life, habits, and even I presume dress.

Civilisation no doubt tends to bring closer together many of the superficial, or subordinate, differences between the sexes. It assimilates the education of men and women; it breaks down the barrier which keeps men and women in separate lives. In many things high civilisation does bring, not absolute equality between the sexes, but great correspondence. It co-ordinates and mutually adjusts the lives of men and women, bringing the influence of women to bear more and more into all phases of men's lives, destroying the last traces of the subjection of women, the slavery of women, the presumed inferiority of women.

Politics, science, philosophy, art, industry, social economy, become at last fields wherein the part of women is fully as important as the part of men. The hard and fast barriers of a ruder age are destroyed, and in all departments of human life the full emancipation of women is accomplished. So far from being blind or deaf to all these truths, we are the first to hail them as the very corner-stone of a high and true social life.

With higher civilisation the essential differences of sex become ever more and more striking and efficient.

It is a natural law, not only of human nature but of all organic nature. The higher the development of the organism, the more highly specialised are its



distinctive qualities: the more perfectly differenced is its peculiar function. The differences are far greater between man and man in a highly cultured society than they are in a savage society. The difference between Shakespeare and a ploughman (unless he is Robert Burns) is far greater than that between any two bushmen or Snake Indians. The differences between the civilised man and child are far greater than between the savage man and his child; the civilised man is enormously more the superior of the brute than the barbarian is.

If civilisation is the real development of the organism in its natural and best way (and nothing else is, or can be, civilisation), civilisation necessarily develops the special function of every organism—just as a cultivated rose differs from a garden double dahlia infinitely more than the dog-rose differs from the wild dahlia. The same law acts, as man and woman are more highly cultivated. Their distinctive functions are more and more marked, even as their lines of development become more and more perfectly parallel and closer side by side.

That is, of course, if the organisms do differ to begin with. And even this is perhaps disputed in an age of interminable paradox. We say frankly that man and woman do differ organically in profound and infinite ways. Man and woman are different organisms. Since all human and moral philosophy rests on a basis of biological and cosmological law, on the laws of organic life and physical conditions, the organic difference of man and woman is as real as it is complete. It is so much the fashion for a shallow sophistry to slide over plain truths of science, that it is necessary for us to fix our minds firmly on this.

To begin with, the bodies of women are very much smaller, lighter, softer, weaker, than those of men—very

much more sensitive to certain shocks and impulses,—and far less capable of very prolonged strain. That is only the first difference. The next is that, independently of size and strength, the nervous organisation of woman differs from that of man (1) in being much more subtle; (2) in having a less stable equilibrium, *i.e.* in being more sensitive and easily affected; (3) and, principally, in being much less in volume, mass, force. No juggling can get rid of this —that if fifty men were set to fight fifty women anywhere, the women would be beaten; if fifty men and fifty women were exposed on a raft in the ocean without food or water, the men would survive the longest—more of the women would die of nervous prostration. Finally, the female cerebrum, cerebellum, and nerve ganglia in the average are greatly outweighed by the male.

But this is only the beginning of the organic difference. The strictly sexual difference is truly profound, running into the whole of life, modifying radically the entire physical, intellectual, and moral constitution; causing constant interruption to the physical and mental activity, mysteriously connected with the entire nervous organisation, and at epochs of gestation, birth, lactation, menstruation, and decline of life, more or less completely suspending the ordinary life and external activity.

All this is, however, but the bare physiological difference. Yet how profound it is; and it is the indispensable basis and nidus of all mental, moral, social life. But the mental, moral, and social differences growing out of these physical differences are far more important. It would be a miserable and narrow view indeed to regard the physical difference as the dominant, and all the rest but the accidental differences. It is a notion, at once crazy and brutal, that men and

women differ as individuals differ, but not as sexes differ; or only as sexes differ in certain physical respects, as Laplanders differ from Patagonians, or Englishmen from Hottentots—the one sex smaller, less strong than the other, each having one peculiar physical function.

II. Mankind, it is often forgotten, cannot be divided into men and women, and never, as a fact, live as individuals. An individual is really a logical conception, a subjective generalisation. Individuals can be thought of; but individuals do not live. Nervous systems can be conceived in thought; they do not exist in reality, detached living entities. Men and women do not exhaust more than half of mankind. There are quite as many children; and children are not men and women.

Then again, men and women cannot live apart, either from each other, or from the children. Humanity would come to an end if they tried. We cannot count off so many million women, so many million men as similar units, as we might so many million trees in a forest, or so many soldiers in an army. Humanity would not exist if it only consisted of so many individuals. An army would not exist if it consisted of so many million of legs and so many millions of arms, trunks, and heads, and so forth. Unless the arms, legs, trunks, and heads were organically compounded in living human bodies there would be no army, even if it had the requisite number of legs and arms.

There can be no Humanity unless it be made up of so many persons organically united in families. Humanity consists of families, not of individuals. Individuals are only an artifice of logic, for statistical purposes or the like. All real life, for the great bulk of mankind, implies the distribution of mankind in *families*.

If we keep this steadily in view we shall go right. It is only when we persist in the metaphysical habit of thinking of society as made up of individuals that these aberrations and confusions arise. If men and women lived in the world as separate units like trees in a wood, very different results would follow. But, as a fact, they do not, and cannot, so live. They live in groups, in families, in households; some no doubt temporarily detached from their families, but all naturally and necessarily beginning life in families, and always actually or potentially forming part of a household large or small, at least for a great part of their lives.

And since mankind do and must live in families, and since all high civilisation immensely develops the organisation of family life, and makes each family more and more a distinct organ in society, a whole series of considerations arise as to the management, preservation, protection, education of the family; as to the respective duties of father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, sister, brother; as to the special function *in* the family of each member of it; as to the relative functions of young and old, strong and weak, equals and superior, male and female.

All this, acting and reacting, on the one side on the ineradicable differences of sexual organisation, on the other on the institutions, duties, laws, and customs of society, combines to create that inexhaustible mass of differences in mental aptitude, in emotional character, in sympathy, in tenderness, in faculty for arts, in affection, in power, in courage, in patience, in magnanimity, in industry, in a thousand qualities of heart, brain, and will, which we see in the highest types of modern civilisation as distinguishing the function of women from that of men.

It is the lowest type of savage life where we find



the squaw and the brave hardly differing except that the squaw is less fit for war, and is the drudge of the warrior—if there be not a still lower type where men and women are imagined as much alike as mares are to horses. The highest type of civilised life at the other end of the scale, introduces us to all those subtle differences of nature, and those finely graduated functions which we find in modern life. If men and women were simply so many free, equal, independent John Smiths and Mary Smiths, but otherwise on terms as equal, similar, and independent as the men and women passing in the streets each their own way, there might be ground for the ultimate assimilation of men and women.

But the streets give us only an accidental and temporary view of life. Men and women come there for a special object, for a brief hour. Follow these commonplace, hard-working men and women to their homes—they all have homes—and then we find their real life, their permanent, constant life; the children, the wife, the husband, the mother, the father, the brother, the sister, the companion, the friend, the servant, it may be. There is the supper to be got ready, the things to be cleared, the children to be put to bed, the father to be talked with, the morrow's work to be got ready, the week's spending-money to be counted up, the thousand tasks, cares, thoughts, which make up the real life of us all,—all the duties of affection, patience, courage, ingenuity, and energy, which constitute man's highest nature.

Now here we have a field, where human nature, from the dawn of social life, has found an inexhaustible body of different but appropriate functions. It is found, as a fact, that the mother can care for the baby better than the father; that the father can stand the rough work in the field better than the mother; that

the family will simply expire unless, in the seasons of weakness for the child-bearing mother, and the young for many years, the husband and father fight, toil, build, defend, construct for all. It is found that in sickness no care of the man's equals the woman's; that no tenderness of the man's approaches hers, no patience, purity, constancy, mercy, or long-suffering. It is found, as a fact, that the parts are best filled by young and old, male and female, strong and weak, courageous and loving, each bearing different functions.

III. From this germ, coeval with the cave-bear, have grown all the subtle and infinite gradations and *naunces* in the characters and minds of men and women; in the highest types of civilisation they reach up to those profound moral and mental differences which give such charm, strength, and reality to our social existence, and which have been idealised for us by the poets of every age. They who talk of the assimilation of men and women, the effacing the petty differences of sex, might as well tell us that Othello might have been a woman, and Desdemona a man; that Ophelia and Hamlet were as like as two peas; that Tom Jones and Sophia differed only in having male and female bodies; that it was a mere accident that Jeanne d'Arc was not a boy, and Julius Cæsar or Oliver Cromwell girls. Poetry, philosophy, history, morals, physiology, common sense—all teach us, that close as they are, like as they are, and more and more destined to co-operate in one life, men differ from women in all sorts of ways,—in moral and emotional power, in qualities of heart, brain, and will, in aptitudes, temper, resources, and tendencies; that the bare physiological distinction of sex is quite the least difference, though it is the essential basis of other differences. And finally, those moral, mental, and ethical differences, though ever brought closer into harmony and co-ordination, are



perpetually being accentuated anew by the progress of civilisation.

We need lay down no absolute law as to the respective powers of men or women. It is quite conceivable that if the male sex had been formed by nature (as in some animals) the weaker, the smaller, the more exposed to periodical prostration, if men had the feminine qualities more pronounced than women, had a genius for cherishing a child, and for inspiring love and subduing passion, and if children were picked alive and hearty off a gooseberry bush, and looked after their own nurture and education like young tadpoles, it is perfectly possible that relatively women might have been the stronger, more active, courageous, the harder and coarser part of the human race. They would realise the ideal of our enthusiasts for the masculinity of women.

But all this is a mere fairy tale, wildly unlike the real facts of the actual world. Civilised society exists; it is the complex issue of hundreds of centuries of human institutions. The parts have been cast for millions of years in this great drama of the world. Men and women live not in units but in pairs: rather in groups, in families, in a thousand fixed institutions which it is too late now to destroy and resist. Men and women, since the days of fig leaves, have worn at different dress:—have different personal habits, wants, faculties; have functions, different though corresponding, in the home and out of it, in industry, in social intercourse, in war, in politics, in teaching, in worship.

Such as these different functions, institutions, and habits are in the common acceptance of civilised Europe, we must accept them in the main. Far from believing them perfect, and not falling short in being capable of great development and purification, in the

main we must accept the idea of common sense, that the parts of men and women in life should be so far different as is required by their differences of structure, and moral and mental habit.

Those who would recast these respective parts, and equalise the practical functions of the two, forget that this is no simple question to be settled by itself, whether this or that woman be not as able to argue a cause or make a speech as this or that man; but rather since the institutions of society, family, education, manners, laws and morality, all hang together and stand or fall together, the real question is, whether the ancient pillars of social union shall be shaken out of their sockets.

The ancient judgment of civilised mankind is simply that *men* are fitter for the laborious, rougher, dangerous, exhausting, and outdoor forms of industry; *women* fitter for the more delicate, subtle, artistic, domestic forms of industry; that men have more energy, courage, coolness, and stability; women more affection, tenderness, mercy, and self-devotion; that the intellect of men is more capable of prolonged and intense abstraction, is a drier light, as Bacon says, and can be kept longer in extreme tension at a steadier glow; that the intellect of women is more alert, in quicker correspondence with the external world and the internal world of emotion, is altogether more delicate, more subtle, rapid, and versatile. All this is the A B C of human nature, embodied in a thousand institutions, customs, and maxims, idealised in a thousand types of art from Pheidias and Sophocles to Raphael and Shakespeare, Fielding, Scott, Miss Austin, and George Eliot.

Who now wishes to propound the idle, silly question —Which of the two is the superior type? For our parts, we refuse to answer a question so utterly



unmeaning: Is the brain superior to the heart? is a great poet superior to a great philosopher? is air superior to water?—or any other childish conundrum of the kind. Affection is a stronger force in women's nature than in men's. Productive energy is a stronger force in men's nature than in women's. The one sex tends rather to compel, the other to influence; the one acts more directly, the other more indirectly; the mind of the one works in a more massive way, of the other in a more subtle and electric way. But to us it is the height of unreason and of presumption to say anything whatever as to superiority on one side or on the other. All that we can say is, that where we need especially purity, unselfishness, versatility, and refinement, we look to women chiefly; where we need force, endurance, equanimity, and justice chiefly, we look to men.

Out of this dualism, or double part of the two sexes in human life—a dualism that results in part from the organisation of the sexes, and in part is the accumulated effect of infinite ages of habit and social institutions,—there has grown up a complex distribution of parts in life, some natural, we say, to women, some natural to men. And the future of civilisation will enforce and increase this distribution of parts, instead of effacing it, inasmuch as it tends to develop the higher nature of men as well as of women. In this age, when all possible opinions about human nature are thought equally plausible, and when all synthetic habits of treating human nature as a whole are lost in the habit of special analysis, in solvent criticism of detached details, it is argued that every distribution of parts should be a perfectly open question, always to be decided for each individual case by the private judgment of each individual.

This is all very well where the point to be decided

is a simple question of personal aptitude, as if a man shall go into the army or to trade, or if a woman shall marry or remain single. It is not a simple, not a personal matter at all. People are born male or female, they have fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wholly apart from their personal choice; and, when they pair, they have sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, and a multitude of family and social relations grow up round these facts, practically irrespective of their control or choice.

The moral and social value of institutions depends on their being institutions—creations and forces of soeiety, beyond personal caprice, and independent of individual fitness in the particular case. Institutions would become centres of social contagion, if in each individual case the personal qualities and suitability of individuals had to be separately judged, and judged by the person himself. Marriage differs from all voluntary unions chiefly because it is a union which has passed out of the voluntary purpose of the parties: into one which society for its own sake has taken into its own hands and on which it imposes its own moral and legal duties. If in marriage, husband and wife were free at all times to decide that their union were no longer suitable, to abandon their children, and to resume their single liberty, marriage would cease to be a social institution and would become a bestial cohabitation.

The relation of parent and child produces certain moral, legal, and social rights and duties respectively, which society and law enforce without any reference to individual fitness or personal choice. The family would cease to exist if it were always an open question whether the parent should feed, educate, or control the child, and the child should obey, love, and respect its parent. The family would come to an end if it



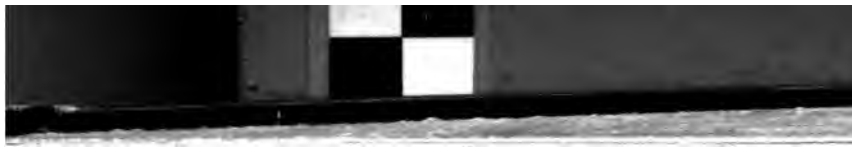
were an open question if the brothers could marry the sisters, and whether the sons could chastise their mothers. It is quite possible that in extreme cases there are families where it would be better for the parents to obey the children, and where the children *ought* to control their parents, possibly where, both on physical and moral grounds, it would be perfectly wise that brother should marry sister, as Egyptian and Asiatic princes did.

These horrible and extreme possibilities may show that social institutions would break up or turn into poison unless they did override individual exceptions and personal qualities. The moral use of them to mankind is that they are an external social control imposed on personal licence. Society would come to an end if its institutions were always dependent on the personal equation of the individual. There are some men who no doubt are more fit to live the lives of women than of men, who would be healthier and happier, nay, more useful personally, if they adopted women's gowns, took charge of a nursery, spent their time in sewing rather than bricklaying. There are some women who would be healthier, happier, and certainly more useful, if they discarded petticoats, and became soldiers, sailors, cab-drivers, and policemen. But the world would be turned upside down if the external dress and distinct habits of the sexes were interchangeable at the will of the person; if young men in college discovered that the young fellows with whom they rowed, read, and supped, were girls; if the charming woman with whom we chatted agreeably at a party were really a soft young man of effeminate looks and tastes; if a man presented himself to nurse and bring up our children; and if stout wenches in corduroys undertook to carry our boxes at a railway, or enlisted in the line to see some active service.

Human society would be dissolved. Morality, decency, family, and social life would disappear. And all this is to be for the sake of some exceptional individuals, who preferred to gratify their own tastes rather than submit to social control, essential to the welfare of society. The moral and the social value of institutions to mankind depend on their being external forces to modify and restrain selfish passions, wholly beyond the reach of arbitrary personal caprice, and even of individual fitness in particular cases. The family is the grand example of this. Its whole moral efficacy rests on this, that it is not an open matter, it is not a question of this or that one's fitness, his or her inclination. Husbands must provide for their wives, and protect and educate their children, worthy or unworthy. Wives must do their duty by husband or child whether their duty is irksome or not, adequately repaid or not. All social institutions share this character. Their value consists in this—that they are external to the personal quality.

It is a separate question what the specific function may be, and how far it is open to improvement. No social institution is perfectly unchangeable nor exempt from the law of progress. It is quite possible that the course of civilisation may gradually open certain functions to women that are hitherto reserved to men, and make interchangeable some parts which have been supposed finally cast. But all this must be treated with the proper conditions. It is too often treated nowadays as if it were a simple isolated question to be determined by a few striking exceptions.

If a social function, hitherto reserved to men, is to be opened to women, let it be considered along with the whole scheme of social functions and the general meaning and necessity for social functions, and with the special reasons which take it out of the class of



social functions peculiar to men, and whether or not the boon to exceptional individuals outweighs the general social disturbance. What we repudiate is the doctrine that every possible distinction that can be effaced between men and women is a gain; that these differences between men and women are a physiological phenomenon important to the individuals, but in which society has no concern; and that the whole case for effacing the specific reserve of any social function is proved when it shows that Mary, Maria, and Jane can do it as well, or nearly as well, as John, Thomas, and Harry.

Some men, we know, learn to sew with their toes, and others to walk on their hands. But before we recommend the youth of the future to make their hands and their feet interchangeable organs, we had better consider the general effect on the human organism of walking with the heels swinging high in the air, or of holding the feet on a table at the level of the eye.

The sum of the social institutions and observations whereby the life of men and women is differentiated amounts to this, that from the vast preponderance of lovingness in the woman, from her delicacy of moral, intellectual, and physical nature, from all those gifts of taste, goodness, adaptability, quickness, that we call womanliness, the great superiority of women lies in private life, in all that belongs to the home, to the care for the young, the suffering, the old, the afflicted —that is to say, that her work essentially belongs to the spiritual, the affective, the domestic, that the heart is her sceptre and the family her empire. And it equally follows from the great preponderance of man in strength, endurance, mass and bulk of physical, intellectual, and energetic power, from his superior steadiness of nerve in all things—in a battle, or a

political crisis, or a criminal trial, or in his power of abstract tension, in the making of an epic poem or a railway, a system of philosophy, or an operation for cancer,—that man's sphere is essentially the material, that of public life, organised industry, the field, the factory, and the government.

Men and women, it is true, do not divide out the whole map of life into separate tracts—women, as it were, taking one continent and men another; men taking politics, women the home; men taking education, women taking social intercourse; men taking industry, science, art; women taking morality, love, manners, charity. Nothing of the kind. Both men and women have to take the whole field of life, and cover the whole ground. The difference lies in this—that men and women have different ways of treating this field, and affect it by different qualities and forces. Men have to do with the home as well as women; men mostly finding the material part and being responsible for the maintenance of that, and women playing a larger part in its purity, happiness, and sweetness.

Women have to do with education quite as much as men; but the task of women is rather more with the education in the home, that of man more the education in the school. Women are at least as industrious as men, and their industry is quite as essential to human comfort; but it has less to do with steam, the use of tools, and huge factories. Women have to do with politics, when they form political opinion, and set men a high ideal of social duty. So, too, they have to do with science, art, philosophy; though in each case in the more subtle and moral forms of these, where superior delicacy of perception is more necessary than intense power of prolonged abstraction. Everywhere and in all things Woman



is the noblest work of civilisation, and her true work is to make a yet nobler civilisation by infusing into human life her supreme womanly qualities in her inimitable womanly way.

Let us hold fast by this—that the great task before us is to make woman more womanly and man more manly, and the two main wants in this direction are to enlarge the opportunities for woman to develop her inexhaustible wealth of affection, purity, and moral judgment; on the side of the man to teach him the duty of taking on himself the maintenance of woman. The set of the sophistical utopias which seduce some of the lettered classes is all the other way. It is to narrow in every way the opportunities of women to cultivate their affective nature, and to plunge them into the industrial mill, or into the intellectual arena of the day. Its aspiration is to make woman the rival of man, the competitor of man, in his trade and his public life; to make it impossible for him to take on himself the task of exclusively maintaining woman.

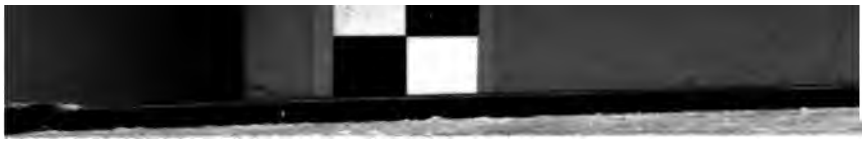
And all this is done in the name of the dignity, the freedom, the true elevation of woman! Women are to be turned into second-rate men in public and industrial life, in order that they may abandon more completely any pretension to supremacy in their own domestic, moral, and purifying life. And the equality of the sexes is to be the prize of this gigantic process of levelling down one sex to uniformity with the other. The true ideal of the dignity, the elevation, and real emancipation of women is far different. We would emancipate woman from systematic labour in the factory in order to leave her free to cultivate her moral tenderness, and to exercise her real spiritual ascendency.

Is it possible that there is no field open to woman

for the further exercise of all her great gifts, moral, social, intellectual, but that, in very want of employment, she must needs descend into the workshop or the professions to compete hand to hand with man? It may be that in the corrupt, ill-trained, artificial, and unsocial stratum of the wealthier society, time hangs idle on a woman's hands. But we cannot reverse the institutions of the world for the pinings of a few misunderstood girls, or satisfy the selfish ambitions bred in the morbid air of a small artificial class.

It is true that man (and, indeed, woman) has never done justice to the intellect of women; that, alone of the poets, George Eliot has attempted to idealise it in art. It is true that the intellectual powers of women are far grander than poetry, philosophy, or psychology has yet imagined, immensely superior to the standard which conventional opinion presumes to set up. Humanity forbid that I should utter one word to countenance the brutal commonplaces as to the mental inferiority of women to men. To me the intellectual capacities of women seem a depth always of unfathomed reach. And for my part I humbly aver that I never talk half an hour with a cultivated woman without acknowledging to myself how much my education has been neglected.

And here in this intellectual power of women (undervalued hitherto, we admit) what a grand future is open! For the first time in human history, we claim for women an education the same in all things as men's, and vastly in advance of any system of education actually open to men. The whole range of the sciences, the whole field of human history, the masterpieces of poetry of all ages and of all languages, the great truths of philosophy, morals, and religion,—these are offered to women; nay rather! these will



be held indispensable to women's education, to the education of all women, rich or poor.

To women our ideal opens a new world, in assigning to them so great a task in education, in calling them to take their due part in science, in poetry, in art, in all forms of intellectual achievement. Positivism, as a religion, grew out of the profound admiration of the greatest of modern intellects for the moral and intellectual qualities of a woman of genius. It is saturated, as a system, with a recognition of women's intellectual powers, and with the mighty things that are yet in store for their achievement. No system of philosophy, religion, or morality ever approached the Positivist system in the part it assigns in human civilisation to women's brain. And we are told that we Positivists undervalue the intellect of women and would make of women dolls, or images of conventional worship. We treat such a charge with silent disdain.

We, whose future demands of the intelligence of women tasks more high and severe than any which in our ordinary ways of life are expected from men, can smile when we hear that the true test of the mental calibre of the sex is to be found by their interest in the gossip of the lobbies, or the snippety criticisms of third-rate magazines. The intellect of the women whom we honour and trust, to whose moral and mental impulse we are proud to surrender our own intelligence, needs not the hall-mark of the lobbies, the clubs, the journals, or the law-courts. We find it in our homes brighter, keener, and truer than any which we jostle and wrestle with in the crowds outside, be they male or female. Our true ideal of the emancipation of Woman is to enlarge in all things the spiritual, moral, affective influence of Woman ; to withdraw her more and more from the exhaustion,

the contamination, the vulgarity of mill-work and professional work; to make her more and more the free, cherished mistress of the home, more and more the intellectual, moral, and spiritual genius of man's life.

This ideal is not to be attained at once. It is not to be attained at all by mere forbidding, condemning, restricting. Here, as ever, Positivism exhorts. It does not prohibit. It does not set up to judge specific institutions, draw up amendments to Bills in Parliament, condemn persons and given acts. It sets up on high an ideal; it exhorts, stimulates, advises, and warns. It does not utter edicts or make crimes. It will look fairly on honest exceptions and real exemptions. For my part I could imagine, in this matter of the sexes, an exceptional woman, or an exceptional man, undertaking almost any unusual function, or doing almost any unusual thing, under real qualifying circumstances. I can conceive a woman leading an army like Joan of Arc, a female Lord Chancellor, a female Poet-Laureate, and a female Prime Minister—anything, perhaps, but exchanging clothes, to which I have a constitutional repugnance; but under qualifying conditions of an extraordinary kind, in the cause of morality and society, and not in the cause of personal ambition, restlessness, and democracy. In the four thousand years of recorded history there have been one woman-poet—Sappho; one heroine in arms—Joan of Arc; one stateswoman—Queen Isabella of Castille.

We have all a home which we can labour to make more truly the free home of the women, and the comfort and purification of the men. We can all do something to make women's work more worthy of women, and less like that of men. We can all recognise that the true future of women is a spiritual



and not a material development, and that in order to give women scope for that spiritual development, the material tasks of the world must fall mainly on man; that to force men and women like a herd of cattle into the same undistinguished tasks of material labour is to degrade both man and woman, intellectually, morally, and even materially.

IV

THE WORK OF WOMEN

In the last Essay we laid down some general ideas, the whole effect of which was to show that the true aim of a higher civilisation would be to complete the *co-operation* of man with woman, and not to obtain the *identity* of man with woman. The question is not one of superiority or inferiority, but of harmony; co-ordination of functions, not assimilation of function; not equality in the crude sense, but real correspondence.

In all this we are only holding by the accepted doctrine of the world. The philosophers, moralists, poets, and teachers have not been altogether wrong in their general estimate of women's great qualities, though they have not yet done justice to their intellectual powers. And as to functions of women and their work in the world, the common-sense view of modern Western civilisation is not utterly misguided.

The whole burden of proof is really on those who seek to upset an immense body of social traditions and customs, supported by an immense consensus of opinions, by the vast majority of men and women alike. Mr. Mill has argued his case, and the whole contention now goes on this basis, that social institutions cannot be fairly judged until we have had



experimental proof of a society in which for a generation or two the old custom has been unknown; and that there can be no harm in leaving any custom or institution a free and open question to be settled by personal choice in each case.

A wilder and more anarchical plea cannot be imagined. Society is far too precious a result of civilisation, and of far too slow a growth, to be risked in fantastic experiments, which may destroy its life even before the experiment is complete. An enthusiast might as well urge us to try the experiment of a new patent brain or stomach warranted never, like the old ones, to wear out. We hear much about Vivisection in these days. But the worst and most antisocial kind of Vivisection is the claim of those who want to try experiments on the living body of society in order to see how it works, and how much society can bear without sinking. The very purpose of social customs is to protect society, not the particular individual subject to it; and its whole value consists in this, that it is above choice or any personal peculiarity. Mr. Mill and his followers argue this matter as if it only concerned the persons themselves in question. Such an idea cuts at the root of society as an organism.

In spite of the regard and admiration I feel for Mr. Mill, I cannot accept his opinion on this matter as worth anything. A man who, as he was known to do, wished to see marriage itself modified to meet personal inclination, had really lost all sense of the true value of social institutions. To the anarchical, critical temper of modern discussion, it seems quite an obvious thing to say—Leave people free to decide on their own lives and to follow their own natural bent. We cannot do so without affecting all others in the same society, who have no kind of wish to try the

experiment. In order that any custom may have any effect on *conduct*, may purify and steady men's lives, it must be a custom honoured in the observance, not in the breach, and if not observed universally, regarded at least as a matter of common duty. The continual breach of any custom, much more the claim even of a few to a right to break it, undermines and discredits it for all.

Marriage is the great example of this. The successful assertion, even by a small minority, of a right to terminate the marriage at will without any social disapproval, would soon destroy in every marriage the sense of permanence and finality, which is the soul of marriage, and would undermine confidence and devotion between husband and wife. Every phase of the family would give us the same result. If some children asserted, without blame, their entire independence of parental control, all parents would find it impossible long to control their children. If parents were morally justifiable in neglecting their children, the maintenance of their offspring would cease to be treated as a natural duty. If the sense of self-respect and respect for others, which we call the conduct of gentlemen, were displaced by the habits of slum-loafers, we should all have to be on our guard in public and in private against brutality and personal outrage.

The world would be a different place if the habit of personal politeness towards women were given up, little as it is now enforced as it should be; and if women, or even a small group of women, insisted on absolute equality, and ridiculed the concession to them of any deference which they could not personally enforce for themselves. If, when a man opened the door of a railway carriage for a lady, he ran the risk of hearing her say: "Leave it alone, please; I can do it myself!"—he would lose the habit of opening it



altogether. Every one can see how profoundly our social existence is modified and exalted by the rule that it is disgraceful under any circumstances for a man to hit a woman—a rule which goes deep down into the roughest and most immoral of the community, and but for which some streets would be a very pandemonium.

If a set of emancipated and ambitious young women, proceeding from gymnastics to fisticuffs and the art of self-defence, loudly repudiated the protection of this rule, and insisted on their personal right to hit, and to hit back, and showed themselves well able to back up a word with a blow, ruffianism would be rampant everywhere. The idea of disgrace in hitting a woman being destroyed, the great majority of men and women would sink into the relative position of big and little boys at school; and personal bullying would become quite a natural thing in those ages and classes where fisticuffs are in common use. By asserting absolute equality, the respect for sex must be destroyed; and much brutality will be the result. Something of the kind takes place wherever social customs are defied. Every time a man or a woman asserts some liberty to defy custom, a social institution is snapped; and all alike, men and women, feel their lives affected.

All our social habits rest on a well-grounded confidence that our relations, friends, and companions will behave in a certain way, and our lives are moulded by this confidence. The most continuous influence over our conduct is that of our mothers, wives, sisters, daughters. It is a moral and a spiritual influence precisely because it does not rest on command, business, experience, and wealth. Admit the entire equality and assimilation of the sexes, and our wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters are in the moral position of partners of a certain kind. The young expect from

their mothers inexhaustible watchfulness and affectionate counsels; they are wont to look on their mother's opinion as higher than that of the world, and they know that they will always find her ear open to their sorrows, anxieties, hopes, and joys. A son finds the best of fathers a very different person from the best of mothers: his relations to his father and to his mother are of a wholly different kind, essential and beautiful as both sets of relations are. The sister is wholly different from the brother, as is the daughter from the son. Even less is the relative position of husband and wife interchangeable.

Assume that the entire equality between the sexes is carried to the limit that some dream of. Social utopias and reforms are best tested by being supposed to be universally adopted in their extreme form. Assume that the equalisation of function is logically carried out—that employments, professions, habits are interchangeable at will between the sexes. Grant that our mothers, sisters, daughters are just as likely to be printers, tailors, merchants, lawyers, and doctors, clerks, accountants, public officials, as our fathers, brothers, or sons. What would be the result? Our mothers would be as little at home as our fathers; they would come home as much fatigued, and as much in want of mere rest; they would be far too much absorbed in professional life to listen to the small troubles of their children, and too much women of business to give way to sentiment. The mill of hard work would make them so much alike that nothing but a difference of name and of dress would remain to remind us that the one were the women and the other the men of our household—though why the difference of name and dress should be retained, when the moral characteristics were gone, it is difficult to see.

This is true not merely of our family life, but in



all forms of our social intercourse. We are accustomed to treat women everywhere in public, in private, in society, in business relations, with a certain respect and deference, which, weak as it is, imperfect as it is, is the living symbol to men of the moral influence of women, to develop which is the most precious mission of civilisation. That pure and sacred acknowledgment by the stronger of the moral claims of the purer sex would disappear the day that men continually found women in desperate competition with them for material power, when they found women unsexed by exhausting labour and professional anxieties, rejecting tenderness, persuasion, spiritual earnestness and superior unselfishness as their instrument of power, and claiming their power by force, practical success, and the cruel test of competition.

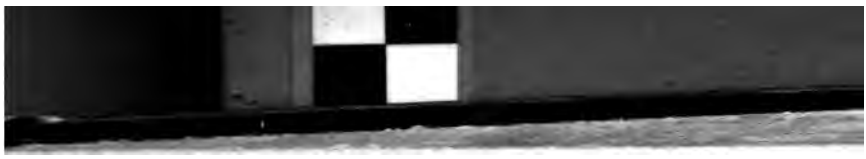
How strangely some women deceive themselves in fancying that they can win in the battle of life by their own strength, and yet not sacrifice the moral ascendency which centuries of civilisation have secured to them. Blind and petty ambition! They cannot have it both ways. If only a certain proportion of women succeeded in claiming their right to fight it out with men on equal terms, to sacrifice family and all the duties of family, to sacrifice all that is exclusively woman's privilege, in order to win by their own energy industrial and professional careers for themselves, the charm which it has cost Chivalry, Religion, and Modern Refinement a thousand years to build up would be snapped at once, and men in the mass would come to regard women as mere female competitors.

Can we doubt the result? Women, as physically the slighter, and less capable of prolonged strain, must be beaten. Their very qualities of heart and brain, their tenderness, unselfishness, and refinement

of organisation would be a hindrance to them in the fight; the harder, stronger, less affectionate sex, free as men are from the handicap of periodic nervous prostration, would reassert their old brutal reign of force. The barbarism of earlier times would return; and the personal ambition of a few unwomanly women would have plunged their sex again into the horrible slavery of a subject and despised order.

After all, civilisation has been in the main right in assigning to Women private, not public life; home industry, not professional industry; spiritual work, not material work. There is ample room for such work for double the number of women that exist. The possibilities of more womanliness in the world are boundless. There is in every home an infinite capacity for moral and spiritual elevation, if only the women in it were free to develop their own nature without exhausting labour and cares. Where is the family which would not be the better for the women in it being wholly devoted to raise its whole standard of life and not to earning their living? Where is the society of which it can be said that it has too much affection, tenderness, purity, and self-devotion? The function of woman is not material production, but goodness, beauty, and truth.

We sometimes hear in well-to-do homes that the women in it are dying of *ennui*, want of occupation, and objectless lives. Such homes are the creation of an artificial society. The immense mass of the people in city or in country would smile in derision to have the like imputed to them. Who ever heard of the working family in cottage or lodging where the women could find nothing to do? In the great maze of our toiling millions the women, alas! have too much to do, and the drudgery of household labour falls with terrible weight on the younger girls and



on the nursing mother. But why does it so fall? Because for the most part so many of the adult women are competing with their own fathers and brothers in the factory and the shop. In the rich and governing classes the social distractions of an artificial life leave the women no leisure for true and high careers. It may be that in classes, sufficiently rich to be freed from labour yet not rich enough to enter the arena of society, time may hang heavy on the hands of many women, who would think it a degradation to mix with their poorer neighbours, and who have not enough education to fashion a cultivated life for themselves. But this is surely the prejudice of an age which breeds the inhuman distinctions of class, and whose true education is still so deplorably short of our hopes and our ideals.

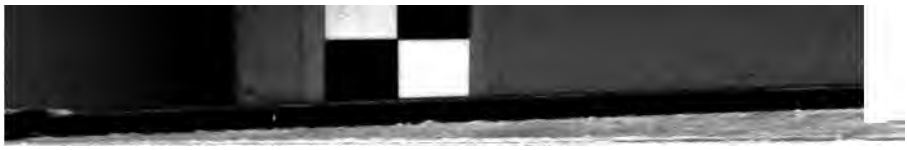
And are these evils—cruel work wrung from the mother and the girl children, and a low and feeble education (both the obvious results of exacting labour) —to be cured by increasing that labour, by withdrawing from the home even more adult women, and in forcing on all women, young and old, the grinding task of earning their daily bread? It would seem like madness, this plan of curing social evils due to overwork in women by subjecting more women to this overwork. It is as if in a society avowedly suffering from poverty due to over-population we were to seek to escape from that poverty by breeding more children to earn a small wage. The relief that the individual or each separate family may get by adding its women and children to the wage-earners is a direct increase of the distress to all other families by multiplying the supply of labour, and labour at lower rates.

Nothing is a more certain economic fact than this: that women's labour is necessarily (in the rule of competition) cheaper labour than men's. And that

for three reasons: the first, that women can maintain their strength on less food and cheaper food than men; secondly, women, from their greater dependence on family life, cannot combine and enforce good wages so easily as men can; thirdly, that, whilst families hold together at all, women will look for at least a part of their maintenance to the men of their families. Accordingly, women's wages are hardly ever the strict market value of their labour. Women's wages are to a great extent extras, supplementary to their maintenance. They are payments in aid of their home support. And just as all wages are kept down by systematic poor-relief to the able-bodied, so women's wages are kept down by the almost universal practice of their being partly at least maintained by men, in their families or out of families.

Either they actually are, or they expect to be, in part at least, maintained by men, as wives, daughters, sisters, or, it may be, companions. For let us not shirk this very horrible fact that, in all large cities and factories and workshops, where men and women are crowded together and the family life is crushed, a very serious proportion of the women, chiefly in the lowest and most miserable of all classes, but to some extent in the well-to-do and even fashionable classes of industry, supplement their wages from time to time by the assistance of men, under conditions very different, more or less immoral, but all of them degrading, even where they fall short of open vice. I make no charge against any class, least of all do I impute this evil to women more than the men, but it would be idle to shrink from the knowledge that the degree in which immoral means of living are open to working women seriously affects even their wages.

Add to this immoral support, the wholesome and right maintenance of women by the men of their



families, and we get a combination of causes which, joined to their less physical and political energy, is certain to reduce the wages of women, if not below their true market value, below their true industrial equivalent. Hence we find that in great cities and the lowest types of industry, wages are permanently depressed below the level of subsistence in health; because a large proportion of the women employed in them eke out existence by other casual or irregular means; or, inasmuch as they may do so, they struggle on on the verge of starvation.

It may be said that this evil in its worst form may be remedied by improved morality and higher civilisation. But the increased supply of women's labour only tends to adjourn a higher civilisation. And for the honour of human nature let us remember that the support which (over and above any earnings) women receive from men on immoral grounds is, after all, but partial and occasional, acting in exceptional and unfortunate industries only. The principal forms of such support are certainly not only moral but the most sacred of duties—the support of the wife, the daughter, the sister, by the husband, father, or brother. Need we discuss the suggestion which none but fanatics indeed could advance, that the true remedy will be to abolish all claims or habits of the kind? Are we to be told that the wages of women will rise to their just economic level when every woman is felt to be as much bound to maintain herself as any man is now, and when women do not claim support from the men of their families more than the men now claim it of the women?

Happily for human nature this extravagant sophism is impossible to practice, at any rate so long as families exist. The bulk of men will still continue to maintain their own daughters as well as their wives,

and to look on their maintenance as a duty. And as the bulk of their daughters will soon be passing into the position of wives, and the minority alone of women have to look to wage-earning as their permanent condition, it follows that under the rule of competition, the wages of women will be always depressed. Nor is it only the rule of competition to which this applies. Whether under a wages-system, or competition, or the rule of equity, or even in socialism, the wages of women will be lower than those of men, inasmuch as in the bulk of industries their work is not economically so valuable as that of men.

Again comes in the law of inferior physical strength, greater liability to the influence of climate, exposure, and privation, and, above all, inferior degree of steadiness of physical equilibrium. No argument about rights can ever make women's labour in the majority of industries worth as much as men's in the simple economical valuation. And whilst that is the case, they cannot fairly expect so large a share of the profit. Every step then that we take towards increasing the proportion of women's work in the joint industry of any society is a step towards decreasing the profit which the workers can obtain.

It is certainly not in the way of positive vice alone that the evils are seen of the indiscriminate work of women and men. Where vice is happily prevented, and where the women themselves are innocent and blameless, they have to endure, in a crowded factory or shop, unless under circumstances unusually fortunate, much that is coarse, contaminating, and repulsive. I am very far from denying that there are shops and factories where the girls are as free from harm as in any home in the world. But they are rare. I speak with some more than ordinary means of knowledge. Friends of my own in our Body have told me of their



repugnance to expose their daughters to such an ordeal. Speaking generally, I assert without fear of contradiction that the factories, crowded with men and women in indiscriminate work, where all idea of home retirement and of personal supervision is out of the question, almost necessarily expose the women to coarseness which all but the very degraded succeed in excluding from their homes, and which is fraught with danger and pollution in any case.

There are in Europe—in Russia, Italy, and Spain—districts, cities, and industries where the limit of the equal employment of men and women is nearly reached in practice; where girls, young women, and mothers, as a rule, are employed as much as men. What do we see? Precisely what we have just described. The family has almost ceased to exist as a moral and civilising power. The home is a mere dormitory or common lodging-house, where the mother and the father are merely the oldest woman and oldest man, and where for that very reason they are the least considered. The women are merely hands who get smaller wages, get the worst of it in a struggle about wages, privileges, or profits, and who are physically thrust into the position of a weaker race. They are nearly as rough, as coarse, as unhandy as the men. They know quite as little of household comfort, of the children's health, of the grace and sweetness of a woman's life. The children are born ill-nourished, and they grow up without care, or they die of sheer mismanagement, because the women who bore them are rather their dams than their mothers—are not mothers in a moral and truly human sense.

As to the influence of the woman on the men within her home, as to her exerting a high spiritual and moral power as wife, daughter, or sister, the very materials for it do not exist. She has no claim or

title, or thought of such a force; nor would he submit to it in any form. The males live in their homes beside the females, whom they find fellow-workers, only fit for lower wages, requiring less food, and easily coerced by force if necessary, but otherwise as completely mates in work as any man in the whole shop. To this ideal are they tending who are striving to thrust more women into work.

The immediate question of our day is not so much the withdrawing women from work, as it is the checking of the still farther degradation of women by urging more of them into systematic industry of the factory kind, under the twofold impulse of the desire of gaining an income, and mistaken ideas of superior merit of women earning their own living. The first task of a rational system of life is to stem the increase of the evil. Let us begin by appealing to men and women alike to withdraw at least the wives and mothers from the factory and the workshop. The evils of this, the physical, moral, economical evils of taking wives and mothers from their homes to plunge them in the mill, are so plain and manifold that we need hardly argue for the duty of resisting it. It would be something if our generation shall have established this, that the place of the wife and the mother is in her HOME; that the first duty of the husband and the father is to maintain his wife and the mother of his children.

As the vast majority of women must in time expect to be wives, as it is too ridiculous for argument to pretend that a wife is degraded by being supported by her husband, how forced and artificial is the pretence that it belongs to the dignity of women to maintain themselves by their own exertions! A daughter, a sister, an aunt, a mother, or a widow, is no more humiliated by being supported by the men of her



household than the wife who is supported by her husband, or the schoolmaster, or priest, or magistrate, who are all maintained by those for whom their lives are devoted. The women so supported are set free to other and nobler duties: to bring comfort, health, purity, and affection into the homes; to teach, to brighten, to moralise the household; to make the men feel how little their hard life of toil represents the whole of man's existence, how infinitely nobler is a worthy home than the workshop or the market-place.

Life would be a poor gift, civilisation would be a doubtful progress, if the whole human race were indefinitely condemned to incessant toil; if one day were to succeed another, one year follow the last, bringing only the prospect of the same unbroken struggle for existence. Industry and effort is man's lot, and industry as a basis of our life is an indispensable necessity. But the whole of man's life is not mere industry; the whole of mankind are not dedicated by nature to toil. Our moral, intellectual, artistic, emotional life have their claims. One half of mankind are not too many to dedicate to these. In any rational view of an organised and highly developed society, each separate function needs a separate organ, each social duty is best performed by a special order, trained and habituated to it from youth.

In the lowest types of society every kind of task falls indiscriminately on every member, on men and women, old and young alike. The rude implements and fabrics, the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter, are roughly and wastefully furnished by the ill-disciplined labour of any man or any woman in the tribe. The tribesmen fish, hunt, collect food, build huts, fight, dance, and chant their rude songs each in turn. Civilisation gives us men trained to do each of these as a separate profession. In time, society forms its

fishermen, its builders, its manufacturers, its husbandmen, its soldiers, its teachers, its artists, poets, thinkers, priests. It separates the home from the factory, the Government from the public, labour from education, moral and spiritual duties from material and temporal duties.

The same distinction of function applies in the highest civilisation to age and to sex. It is the business of the young to learn, of the old to advise, of the adult to work. It is the business of the Home to purify, to moralise, and to elevate; of the School or the Church to teach and guide. And thus it is the business of adult men to supply all material production. It is the privilege of Women to infuse into life a moral and spiritual culture.

Our ideal then is that the whole organised labour outside the home, that is, the mass of factory work, should fall as a rule on the men; that the activity of women as a rule should be exercised in the home. But this does not in any way imply that women are debarred from intellectual, social, professional, or political work, or that the work so done is in any way less in amount or inferior in dignity. Nor does it imply that there is not an immense amount of industry pure and simple open to them in all those departments which admit of household employment organised more or less in the type of a home. But with education, art, science, philosophy, the organisation of charity or mutual help, the care of health on all its sides, the comfort of the desolate, the ignorant, and the friendless, in the refinement of life and the improvement of social culture, in the formation of opinion, in the moral and spiritual education of men,—the work of women is absolutely boundless in extent.

I feel very deeply that this is at most an ideal—an ideal impossible within any reasonable space for this



generation or the next. I know very well that the great body of our fellow-citizens are no more able to withdraw the women of their families from work in the factory and support them at home than they are to devote themselves to a life of simple mental culture. And it would sound like an unfriendly mockery if I told them it was their duty to do what they are quite unable from necessity to accomplish. We would impose no formal obligations on persons, nor would we lay down absolute laws. We ask for no Act of Parliament, no positive prohibition of any kind. We appeal to opinion, to the slow operation of the collective conscience of the people. Fortunately the difficulty is one that is felt in the individual case, not in the aggregate. It is difficult for this or that household to surrender the earnings of the girls. But the general cessation of women's labour must inevitably increase the wages of men. The family would receive the same amount, though the men and the women of it would not be competing against one another and mutually reducing each other's earnings.

There is great talk now about the unemployed, gluts of the labour market, and such remedies as emigration, or drawing off the numbers of those who compete for work. There would be little anxiety on that score if women were not competing with men in every labour market of Europe. All anxiety about over-population, lack of employment, and the super-abundance of labourers is the direct creation of our wild industrial anarchy, the competition for the cheapest labour, and the inevitable collapse of the old traditions of the Family. To seek relief in a glut of the labour-market and consequent low wages in actually increasing the numbers of the workers by thrusting more women into the places of men, is like curing dipsomania by more drink.

Whatever is done will have to be done gradually and partially, and few of us but could do something at once to take some step in advance. Obviously the first and urgent duty is to withdraw from factory labour the mother and the wife. That I take even now to be moral obligation of the first order. The next step, I think, would be to withdraw the younger rather than the older unmarried women, as their independence is less and their future more undetermined. Then it is plain that work in a huge indiscriminate factory, with men and girls side by side, is far more unnatural and destructive of moral life than work in a smaller shop, organised more or less on a domestic type. Obviously, too, the hard and more masculine forms of labour in the field or the mine, the brickyard and the forge, are far more injurious than the more delicate work of scissors, needle, or lace. As a rule, the use of machinery driven by steam is a more unnatural form of work for women than a simple tool worked by hand, and as a general rule the fewer and the simpler the tools, the more congenial the work.

Domestic service in a family, evil as are some of its incidents now, and shamefully as its high duties and obligations are misunderstood, is sound and right in itself. All that is needed is to inform it with a human spirit, and to bring dignity and goodness to bear on this much-perverted institution. But in domestic service purified and regenerated by the spirit of humanity is a true and vast field for honourable women's work. Therein she does not, or at least should not, pass out of the family. She passes for a season into another family, or she would do so, if more worthy ideas of the domestic relation existed. With education in all its forms, with art, with the care of the young, the friendless, the sick, I can hardly see



that women's occupation can ever be unwomanly, whatever form it may take, or however great a training, responsibility, and labour it involve.

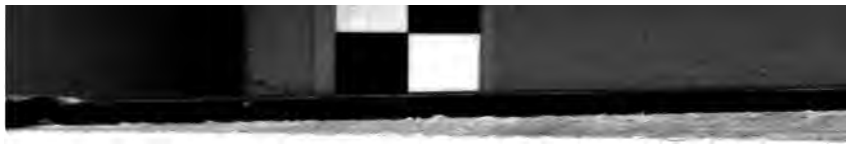
Of the professions strictly so called, of the directing functions of wealth, or power, the same reasoning applies. As doctors, artists, poets, philosophers, leaders of political and social movements, there are doubtless occasional spheres for a few exceptional women. The immense value of such services no one can underrate. But the institutions of society can hardly be arranged to meet a few remarkable exceptions. It is highly desirable that poets and philosophers should exist; but we should think it highly inexpedient to bring up a young man as a poet or a philosopher and teach him to regard it as a professional career. *Poeta nascitur non fit.* And the woman of genius, as doctor, philosopher, artist, or leader, will make herself felt without our turning society upside down on the chance of producing her.

The cry of our day is to make careers for women by effacing the allotment of functions to men and women by the custom of society. The women of rare genius will make their own career without our help: the Sappho, Aspasia, Artemisia, Joan of Arc, the Madame de Staël, the George Eliot of her age, will always be found and recognised by their contemporaries. For myself, I deny that the average of women can ever make as capable heads of a great manufacture or bank or public office, or be as good lawyers, professors, statesmen, as the average of men. I do not deny that they have adequate intellectual power; but they have not the same physical power, and morally, physically, and intellectually they have not the same lasting power and unvarying steadiness of nerve force that men have in business. Many women are quite equal to many men in the ordinary

conduct of intricate business at ordinary times. But all women are liable to one fatal disqualification for high professional duties—*i.e.* moral and physical collapse under special strain: failure of nerve power and of complete self-control at critical moments. And this defect, not important in the minor and less organised forms of work, becomes in the more difficult kinds of professional duty a danger so great that it may ruin a life of toil and destroy the creation of years.

But the true ground for the allotment of special careers to men and to women lies not, in truth, in this line. It is because women are imperatively needed in another career; because the efforts of all the women in the world are not enough to perform it adequately. The career of women is to dignify and elevate the life of man; nor is there any intellectual quality whatever, or any element of character, which may not find ample scope for its highest efforts in the task. There is no side of life which is not open to it, be it politics, art, science, society, manners, or religion. All need the purifying influence of truly competent women. Is not this a career which may satisfy the ambition of any one man or woman? What is the meaning of careers being closed, when the whole range of human education, the whole field of philosophy, science, history, poetry, are open to all, be they men or women? Are women as a rule so saturated and satiated with all the knowledge of mankind, is woman's education so complete and universal, that they must have fresh worlds to conquer?

It seems to me that women should bless the leisure which has opened to those who have leisure such glorious opportunities. It seems to me a nobler ambition to have reached a high standard of mental culture than to conduct a law-suit or manage a bank.



I should think it a nobler ambition to infuse a loftier tone into the political opinion of one's own circle than to give a vote in a general election. For my part, I have taken some interest in politics for fifty years; but, so far as I can remember, I have very rarely given a vote. If I care neither to enter Parliament nor take part in government, nor even to vote in elections, it is because I hold that I do better if I address myself to the duty of moulding opinion whilst I keep out of parliaments, divisions, and polling-booths. I ask no woman to forfeit any claim to political power which I care to exercise for an hour, but I would that every woman in the kingdom cared as much for politics as I do myself.

But it is not in the intellectual, political, or practical sphere that the true ambition of women should lie. Their real career is a moral one to ennoble and purify the entire life of mankind; and I have little sympathy with the ambition which looks on this as a narrow and contemptible office. Can we ever have too much sympathy, generosity, tenderness, and purity? Can self-devotion, long-suffering, and affection ever be a drug in the market? Can our homes ever be too cheerful, too refined, too sweet and affectionate? And is it degrading the sex of woman to dedicate her specially to this task? If it be true, as ten thousand poets and the conscience of mankind have taught us, that these sacred qualities of humanity are found in their highest perfection in woman, is it not the problem of civilisation itself so to nurture our women that these qualities may best be developed? And can Paradox itself assert that these qualities and gifts of heart and character are *best* developed by effacing the attributes of men and women, by plunging women as a sex into that hard and pitiless struggle for wealth, place, or fame which

already has created for them the very evils of which we complain?

If hardness be the curse of this age, are we to cure it by making women as hard as men? If the race after wealth and success brutalises men, are we to open more brutalising careers to women? If our home life has so little strength to correct the evils of our public life, are we to cure all by saying that home life shall not be reserved even for one sex or for any age? If it is neither in intellectual nor in practical energy that our age is deficient, but in unselfishness, in love, in gentleness, and grace, are we to cure the accumulated evils of an age of materialism by teaching women to rely on themselves, to look to themselves, and to work for themselves, by telling them to put their families aside and turn their thoughts to earnings and prizes, to strip off the ancestral instincts of their sex, and to meet man shoulder to shoulder in the rough and tumble of competition?

I do not hesitate to say that the Future of Humanity is bound up in this problem—whether women are to grow more truly womanly or more utterly unwomanly. If the latter, faith in Humanity has no *raison d'être*, no meaning, no future. The ideal of Humanity is the development of woman's true nature, and the purification of man's nature thereby. The assimilation of woman's life to man's cuts off the last hope of establishing the Rule of Love over the Rule of Force, of ever securing for Humanity the future to which we look.



V

VOTES FOR WOMEN·

GREAT as is the revolution in the Constitution demanded to-day by some Women, it is but an incident in a social problem far vaster and more deep. Those who advocate Votes for Women are wont to treat it as a simple electoral reform, such as were the Ballot and the Lodger franchise. It is a very different thing. It cuts down to the roots of our family life—our social life.

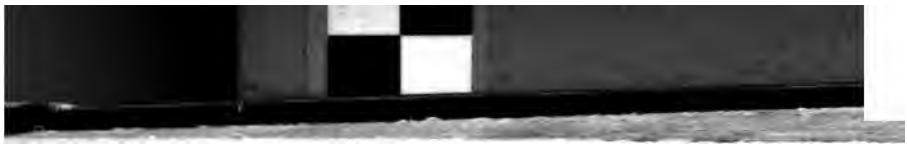
It is ominous to note the levity with which this chaotic change in political life is regarded, and the meanness with which weak public men yield to the clamour of small and noisy minorities. The tremendous experiment of entrusting political power to another sex has as yet been tried (I believe) only in Scandinavia, Australasia, and the rude Far West. The great Republics of France and America decline to risk their peace with any such anomalous fad.

Extension of the franchise of any kind within the same sex concerns politics only: it does not disintegrate families; it may benefit or embarrass the State; it does not plant anarchy in the Home. No thoughtful man or woman denies that the cry of "Votes for Women" cannot be separated from the

entire consensus of the domestic, social, and spiritual existence of Woman as a sex distinct from Man. Education, manners, social philosophy, religion, are all essentially involved in the change. It is no mere affair of Constituencies and House of Commons. It affects life on a thousand sides.

It is not easy to disengage one's mind from the prejudice cast on the cry by the senseless freaks of certain female larrikins of late. But even rowdyism of so silly and suicidal a kind cannot be altogether neglected in a survey of the situation, and that for at least two reasons. The able and distinguished women who have long urged this claim as a right have not succeeded in checking these follies, even if they have seriously tried to check them; and their critics say that they looked on, not with "sombre acquiescence," as a famous revolutionist is said to have looked on at massacres, but with rather an air of amused encouragement. In the result, the cause as a whole suffered from outrages which were as embarrassing to its supporters as they were blackguardly in form.

A second point—and one of much more importance—is this. These vicious attacks upon friends, the indecency, the brutalities, the tricks, the lying, the unmanly and unwomanly devices of these displays, testify to a certain inherent unfitness of women to exercise political power. Nothing can justify girls who behave in public places like the street arabs of a fighting gang in the East End. Nor could any political object excuse women who, on system, resort to personal insolence, mendacity, and physical assaults on doorkeepers and policemen. This is no casual accident of a moment of irritation. What we have seen has gone on for years. It has been maintained by rich and strong associations. It has been organised by the known leaders of "Women's Rights." And



under it we have seen gangs of hired girls behaving in public places, and towards the agents of public order, with the savagery of low viragoes. And many of the Women partisans think these orgies likely to be useful to the Cause.

What such extravagances prove is this—that under strong political inducements women, as a sex, lose their heads, their power of judgment, and their self-control. The immediate aim blinds them to all countervailing reasons, to all fairness, and consideration for other claims. As some criminals are said to "see red," and go for their enemy, some women, when stung with a political idea, however little urgent, practical, or immediate it may be, "see red," and go blindly for that one aim by any means and in spite of any objection offered by friend or foe. They fling aside modesty, the habits of their sex, regard for justice, and common honesty. As to truth, honour, decency, men's respect for women,—these weigh nothing against the "Cry." Now philosophy and experience tell us that Women, as a sex, more or less share this radical infirmity for coolly judging conflicting interests and competing claims.

There is every reason to fear that those fits of blind passion will become systematic. If these viragoes ever did worry men into yielding the suffrage, they would only be heartened to resort to the same tricks to win admission to Parliament. This won, they would yell and ring bells till men yielded them an equal number of seats in the Cabinet. As every question came up for debate, a noisy group of women would rave and intrigue to get their favourite Bill taken first, or passed at any cost. It is the incurable incapacity of the average female mind to strike a fair and quiet balance of advantages and dangers, of which the recent movement has given us signal examples. Men have now

seen women in political action. And they will not trust them. The actual constituencies of men are too often fickle, excitable, and unreasoning. If men were doubled with women, constituencies would seldom be anything else than fickle, excitable, and unreasoning.

I am well aware that in urging this, and in using plain language to express the disgust that sensible men and women feel for female rowdyism, I am exposing myself to the vengeance of ill-conditioned fanatics. I speak plain words, because I see with shame how men and women shrink from uttering what they feel in their hearts. It is, I know, part of the mean game in favour, to try what can be done by insolence, mendacity, and petty terrorism. Nor would it surprise me if some of the hotter spirits proceeded to criminal outrages, as anarchist women have done in Russia and Poland.

I am also well aware that the temper of misrepresentation will seek to treat my criticism of rowdyism as insulting to women as a sex, and my pointing the moral of this rowdyism to prove a general weakness in women for political discernment, as if it were a depreciation of woman's intellect and character. Nothing could be more untrue. All that I have said in preceding Essays of the fine intelligence and high qualities of women as a sex, is perfectly consistent with my rooted objection to giving to women the parliamentary franchise. Nor does this principle tend to rule women out of politics, or gainsay the truth that women have a great and indispensable part to play in political life—the supreme part, in fact, and a part which women alone can fill.

There is neither inconsistency nor paradox in this view. It turns upon the fundamental and indelible distinction between Material and Moral power—between practical Control and spiritual Influence—



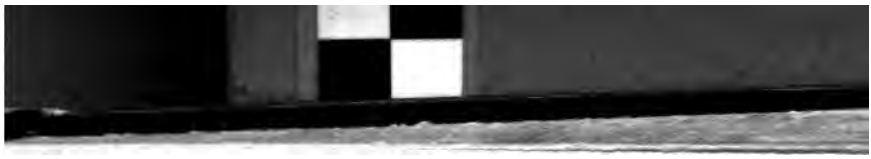
between Force and Persuasion. To develop this innate social contrast, this ineradicable dualism in life, is a prime task of civilisation. This is not a mere contrast or dualism of sex, though the question of sex both illustrates it and shares in it. It marks off every kind of teaching, persuading, or inspiring from every kind of command, judgment, punishment, or combat. All who teach or preach, who do the thought and art of the world *pro tanto* form a moral power. All who make laws, judge civil and criminal causes, who govern the State, form and lead armies in war, exert *pro tanto* a material power. Women, as a sex, are pre-eminently fit to exert this moral power. Men are not only far more fit to exert material power—but for a very large part of it, men form the one sex which is able to exert it efficiently at all.

There are of course exceptions ; and there are no rigid divisions either as to sex, or office, or competence. Some women could fight in war, some women have fought. Exceptional women have passed their lives as soldiers, sailors, brickmakers, and jailors ; and a very few have proved capable rulers. But it would be ridiculous to levy armies of women, to enrol women to make or sail ships, to dig, build houses, work on railways, or serve in the police. It is, first and foremost, because women, as a sex, do not do and cannot do these things—*i.e.* practically the whole of the material work of the world, requiring physical force and representing physical force—that women, as a sex, have no business with any of these things, nor with the political control of these things which votes imply. And it is because men—and men only—can do these things and represent this material force, that men, and men only, are entitled to the political control which in the last resort their muscular force has to make good and defend.

To amalgamate material and moral power in the

same hand inevitably tends to both tyranny and corruption. It makes the ruler oppressive and the moralist self-seeking. When the State begins to enforce its opinions it ends in persecution. When the priest is the master, he makes religion odious. The mother in the Home uses methods very different to those of the politician in the Senate; and she exerts a purer and a nobler power. Moralists, however wise and however stimulating, are often unwilling or unable to measure countervailing interests and claims. And preachers, whatever their eloquence and their religious zeal, are not always to be followed in things of the world. Their counsels are always to be heard and respected, and indeed marked, learned, and inwardly digested; but they too often neglect the practical difficulties which make their counsels impracticable at the time.

It is neither to deny nor to disparage the part in political life to be played by women if we would liken their political action to that exerted throughout history by so many illustrious teachers, moralists, and priests. Socrates, St. Paul, St. Francis, and Milton would never have left the world types of noble morality if they had been empowered by law to compel their respective generations to follow their codes of life. Let the story of Plato's Utopia and the rules of Dominic and Calvin be a warning. The less the spiritual forces are mixed up in government the more spiritual remains the influence and the more free from tyranny is the government. It is not to degrade women's part if we ask them to hold fast to that influence which they have and can use—the spiritual and moral authority,—and not to diminish and debase it by grasping at the inferior part—that material force which they cannot use without soiling their own.



I am not for imposing on women any disability which I am not willing personally to accept. The worst of all despotisms, it has been said, is a "*pedantocracy*"—the rule of philosophers or moralists. Those who devote their whole attention to the theory of politics and the ethics of society, inevitably make unsatisfactory statesmen. Burke, Condorcet, Mill, and Herbert Spencer were never born for politics, and all of them made amazing practical blunders. Compromise is the essence of politics, and the statesman has daily to consider which of many bad, and some very dangerous courses, is the least bad and the least injurious. It is often not even the second-best course which is the least impracticable. All courses are often full of danger, and some of them quite shameful or immoral. But the duty of the moralist is to avoid compromise with anything evil, as the duty of the theorist is to enforce principles in season and out of season.

As for myself, in common with all those who charge themselves with political principle and the ethics of the State, I have through life reserved myself to seeking to influence opinion, whilst keeping clear of political life. Except that I once allowed my name to be used to assert a principle in a famous contest, I have systematically refused to be nominated for Parliament. Though I have been on the Register of several constituencies, both urban and rural, I have hardly ever voted in a parliamentary contest in fifty years. I have never troubled myself to ask if my name were, or were not, on this or that Register. I have taken the keenest interest in all the political contests of the last fifty years. And I have made every effort to influence *opinion*. But I always held that to be a candidate, or even on a candidate's committee, would rather lessen than increase any influence I might have in moulding opinion.

It is a fixed psychologic law that the earnestness of moral and spiritual emotion—which is the strength and beauty of the higher natures—too often shuts off from the ken of those most deeply moved the nice adjustment of balance in competing good and evil, usefulness and risk. St. Bernard, St. Francis, Fénelon, Wesley, the Slavery and the Drink Abolitionists, had noble messages to deliver, but they would prove most oppressive legislators and judges. Their very merit lay in their bold defiance of obstacles, their indifference to all countervailing risks, their disdain of compromise. But compromise is the daily and hourly necessity of practical affairs. And those who disdain compromise are ever on the verge of oppression and disaster, and too often face both together with a light heart. We are bound to hear and weigh all that such men can urge. But it is for men of a very different stamp—often it may be men of a stamp more common and less fine—to decide the issue and abide the result.

Now women in the average, as a sex, share this nature. They form opinions more quickly, less patiently, less coolly than do men. Emotion, prejudice, sentiment, play a larger part in their decisions than in those of men. They are less in the habit of facing practical risks and dilemmas. They will not take pains to walk all round embarrassing crises before they decide; nor do they habitually weigh all sides of a question with a fair, impartial temper. It would be laughable to tell us that men and women are equally fitted by nature to form a balanced judgment of this kind. Common sense records the contrary as a fact. But all political questions and all parliamentary elections really turn, or ought to turn, on nicely balanced judgments of this sort.

But there is a further reason for doubting the



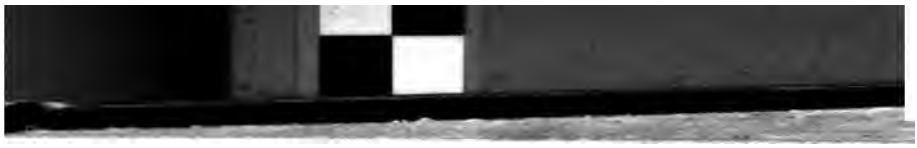
impartial judgment of women as a sex in the ineradicable tendency of the female mind to be swayed by the personal equation. When it is a question of deciding between candidates, when the personal character of a party leader, statesman, or orator is in issue, women are more open to improvise favourable or adverse opinions than are men. It is well that the personal bias should have due consideration, but it is a perpetual temptation to prejudice and injustice. Men never trust a woman to be judge in an intricate case of crime or an obscure conflict of civil rights. "Hard cases make bad law": and female judges would bring justice to shame. Who would trust a woman to pass sentence on batches of prisoners at ordinary assizes? The kind of crime charged, the age, sex, character of every plaintiff or defendant, prosecutor or prisoner, would disturb the mind of a woman, however learned in the law and familiar with crime. Sentences too harsh or too light, judgments that might be good in ethics but very bad in law, would be the result. Who would care to see a woman President of the Divorce Court? Who would trust a jury of women to try prisoners at the Central Criminal Court? For my own part, I would as soon see a woman hangman, or a female warder administering a flogging to a prisoner.

This is no disparaging of Women. It is said in their honour and to their praise. If the hoydens who shout for Bung and ring bells are ready to laugh and jeer at such homely truths, women of sense and good feeling know that there are public duties for which their very virtues and refinements disqualify them. They will amply bear me out in maintaining that women in the average decide mixed questions of right and wrong, safety and danger, profit or loss, rather under the impulse of feeling than after a dispassionate

balance of alternatives. Now the governing of states, problems of taxation, alliances, armaments of war, demand the utmost use of a dispassionate balance of alternatives. It is little enough of this that the voters of to-day possess. Average women can hardly be said to exercise it at all.

It is not to discredit women if we urge that, if women ever obtained a controlling voice over Parliament, the country would be constantly committed to those causes which from time to time appeal to the imagination and the feelings, without due regard to all the cost, difficulties, and risks they might involve. Every "atrocity" indignation movement would be suddenly swollen into an international crisis. Alliances would be made on premature or impulsive grounds. National obligations would be piled up under some outburst of pity. Movements, leaders, and parties would be supported or opposed on inadequate knowledge of facts, on trivial personal grounds, or in spite of obvious risks. The State Budget would be concocted for reasons of sentiment. International alliances and menaces would be the "happy thoughts" of some moment of great excitement. And, without intending it or providing against it, the nation would be plunged into war. Thereupon the burden of new taxation would fall mainly on our sex; the tangle of diplomacy would be wholly our task; and at sea and land the battles would be fought out only by men.

I do not assert that all this is either probable or possible. It is an assumption based on the idea of women having obtained a controlling voice in Parliament. That, of course, in spite of their being a majority of adults, they never could have. Physical force would come into play long before such a point was reached. But I do assert that the admission of women to the parliamentary franchise on equal



terms with men would have a tendency to bring the nation towards such a state of things—intensifying all the evils of our present democracy, and destroying all the present value of the moral influence of women in things political.

We are told—and it is most true—that national expenditure waits on national policy. It is even more true and more important that peace and war depend on national policy. And national policy is a highly intricate and subtle compound of advantages and risks; ideals to be aimed at and difficulties to be overcome; compromises to the making of which problems moral, material, physical, sentimental, diplomatic and strategic enter, cross and recross. They appeal alternately to passion, patriotism, caution, and forethought. They may redound to the honour of a nation, or they may ruin a nation. They are never simple matters, though they often look simple. And the consequences of a false step are terrible to contemplate.

Now I say frankly that I do not trust the average woman to decide these complex issues. I know many able women whose opinion on great political questions I value highly, whose motives and enthusiasm I profoundly respect. But in an experience now of fifty years I cannot trust the judgment of even the most thoughtful women in all the matters of finance, armaments, alliances, and legislation which make up national policy. To speak the truth, I only know one woman whom I would always trust to come to a right decision; and she happens to be a resolute opponent of Votes for Women.

It must be remembered that it is by possessing higher qualities—not for any inferiority of intelligence—which makes the political judgment of the average woman untrustworthy and unstable. The real objection to "Votes for Women," over and above

that it risks imposing on men sacrifices of labour and life which women do not share, is this—that it degrades and weakens the moral and emotional influence which women indirectly give to men and have never failed to give. The power of women to moralise life and to modify action is not lost because it is exerted in society, in the home, in literature, in education. To sink this high and ennobling influence in the rough-and-tumble of elections would be to destroy it and debase it.

Quite apart from the vulgar insolence of the disorderly girls, we have seen how of late years the demand for Votes has been worked by the mass of its advocates with a passion, an unreasoning spirit of mischief, a one-eyed defiance of all the public interests of the nation, and, alas! with that spite and untruthfulness which is too often the failing of some good women even in a good cause. The agitation about Temperance, Contagious Diseases, Punishment for Crime, Marriage Laws, and the like, too often show how women, in pursuit of a movement they desire, develop a rancour, an injustice towards persons, a bitterness of temper, which cause them to fling away common sense, fairness, truth, and even decency. The old saw, however unjust in ordinary life, is too often true in politics: *aut amat aut odit mulier, nihil est tertium.*

We have seen of late—we are destined often to see —*furens quid femina possit.* And this unfortunate tendency in the feminine organism—a tendency which is often shared by some noble-hearted men—will be immensely stimulated if women systematically engage in contested elections. Can the moral influence of women in public life be improved when husband and wife serve on opposed committees, perhaps ridicule and denounce rival candidates on their party plat-



forms: when mother and daughter, sister and brother, vote against each other, and fight out at home the jeers, the falsehoods, and the taunts they have heard in the party meetings? Every home will be a small committee room. And the father, who in old times was called the "Master of the House," will be heckled over dinner by his adult daughters, and badgered to vote for some female fad of the hour.

This is no fancy picture. We have seen how easily in the more excitable natures the agitation for female suffrage stiffens into a kind of sex-war. This sex-war calls out all the latent discontent which too many women unconsciously nurse, and is often a mere mask to the wish for separation in families on more or less equivocal grounds. Equal electoral rights could not fail to inflame a standing war between the sexes, by giving equal power to man and woman where the practical responsibilities and capacities are not equal. Every man who has ever had to back a very unpopular cause, whether religious, social, or political, has often had to face the rancour, insults, and injustice with which he has been treated by women who passionately espouse the opposite side. We have seen women of high character and attainments deformed under arden: zeal for a Cause into implacable and unfeeling enemies of men, whose only crime was that they obeyed a sense of public duty. This sinister temper must be greatly stimulated by introducing woman in the mass to the ordinary turmoil of elections.

This is but an incident of the change, and, we may trust, one far from general. The universal and inevitable result of female franchise would be a subtle weakening of men's respect for women's opinion—and, indeed, soon a weakening of men's respect for women. The woman's vote would always be actually or possibly on "the wrong side." Is the husband to

"canvass" the wife, or the wife the husband? Is the daughter to "canvass" her mother, the brother, or the neighbour, till they promise "to vote straight"? Are wives, mothers, daughters to attend the party meetings, to read the party journals, and search the electoral register? Unless they do, men will think their vote unmeaning—the result of prejudice or chance. How are women to be made fit to exercise the parliamentary franchise, unless they do all that men do in hot electioneering times? And will homes be more happy and more pleasant when they do these things?

Till lately we have all felt easy that, in the hottest fight at elections, we could find peace at home, and need not carry on the wrangle of the street corner over a quiet supper. And the poor man felt safe that his neighbours had no means of getting behind the ballot, if he chose to hold his tongue. But if his wife or his daughter are keen for the "red" ticket, will they not worm it out of him that he voted "blue"? And will his supper be as good and as punctual when his wife is away listening to her favourite speaker, or is abusing the candidate "her old man" has promised to support? And will his daughter be all to him she used to be as he returned from work, when she is deep in the comic posters, fly-sheets, and ribald ballads of the day, or has come home hot from heckling a weak candidate about Sunday shopping, local option, and vaccination?

Jesting apart—and really these things are not mere jests—the serious prospect is that the change will be from the state of mind when men listen to women's opinion, value it, and give it weight, to the state of things when men will dispute with women about matters to which life tells them daily they are closer, and which they know better in practice. Of old, no



opinion was more stimulating and more clarifying than the well-thought view of an able and high-minded woman on a great political crisis. It might not always be practicable, or complete in knowledge, or free from risk. But it was a thing to know and to weigh with care. Alas! we know how in electoral contests, the great issues of right and wrong, wise policy or rash adventure, are obscured by petty details of administration, personal trivialities, and specious promises. It is to side-issues of this kind that the feminine instinct naturally turns. And to extend the parliamentary franchise to women will greatly increase the share of trivialities and personalities in deciding electoral contests.

The parliamentary franchise can only be given to all adult women without exception. A limited extension of the franchise would be fiercely resisted by Labour, and in fact would only result in renewed struggles. But adult female suffrage would affect not only Parliament and elections, but every home and every man, woman, and child in its ulterior results. Its main support is the dogma of Democracy that every sane and adult man and woman are equal. All that I have argued as to the sexes turns upon the true doctrine, that men and women are never equal but different and mutually coincident. But if in many things women are far more fit to lead than are men, nothing has occurred to shake the ancient and eternal truth that men are far more fit than women to rule the State, which, materially speaking, is mainly the work of men's toil, and which in the way of physical defence is solely the task of men's bodies and lives.

VI

CIVIL MARRI

THE question of Lay *versus* Ecc
has become a burning problem
countries, and gives rise in our ow
irritating anomalies. It is ever
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It is certain that a considerable number of English men and the immense majority of English women still look on the Marriage rite as having a sacramental or, at least, a religious meaning. It is certain that a large and growing number of Englishmen look on it as a purely legal solemnity, and they endure the ecclesiastical rite as a mere accident like orange-blossom or the sugared cake. A very resolute minority refuse to accept even this, and object to any ceremonial outside the Registrar's office. The various religious communions, each insisting on their own form of Marriage, are almost infinite. Many of these communions are too obscure, too much scattered, and not sufficiently settled, to make it possible for the State to accept their private local Registers as conclusive, or to confer on any spontaneous Little Bethel that may choose to call itself a communion the legal authority to constitute a binding marriage—such as the Church in England has enjoyed for a thousand years. In the meantime the diversity of sects and the conflict of opinions increase every day. Wedlock never will be, never can be, confined within the limits of any Church sect, or opinion. Men and women, at any rate in the eye of the State, ought to be free to marry into or out of any Church, any communion, any school of thought. Here is a dilemma fertile of strife in which the partisans, first of Civil, then of Religious, liberty, are equally hot, equally wrong and equally right.

As in so many other cases, Positivism offers a fair solution of the problem alike agreeable to Law and to Religion, to Church and to State, to the Secularist and to the Spiritualist. And it does this by holding fast to its cardinal doctrine—the doctrine which solves so many a political and religious controversy,—to keep distinct but co-ordinate the physical coercion of Government and the moral and spiritual

force of Belief, Devotion, or Opinion. Marriage must be treated as having a double character—legal and religious: legal for all, absolutely in the same way; religious for those who choose, in any way they desire and approve at their sole discretion. The State must have its own ceremony, the same for all, indispensable for all, without which there can be no marriage in law. After this, with this, before this (if they so please) any person or community must be free to hold its own religious ceremonial—sacramental or secular, ethical or mystical.

There are two entirely distinct sides to Marriage as a rite: One the lawful union for the purposes of Law and the State; one the spiritual consecration (for all who desire any at all) in such forms and by such functionaries as parties to the union hold binding on their conscience, and congenial to their religious feelings. The strife has arisen from the effort to coerce these two sides into some common rite, from the intolerant desire of statesmen to force religionists to accept their rite, and the equally intolerant desire of Churchmen to force the State to substitute the theological for the political sanction. To Positivists, Marriage is at the same time an act in law—a political function—and also a sacrament or religious consecration. Both are indispensable — perfectly distinct,—alike honourable; and both should be conducted with equal dignity and publicity.

It needs no argument to show—what lies at the very root of law and, indeed, of civil society—that the State has the highest interest in determining the conditions and forms of lawful marriage. The devolution of property, the rights of kinship and family, the whole field of personal law depend on certain solemn acts in the law deliberately concluded with the formalities recognised by law. This is perfectly



independent of Church, nationality, religion, or opinion in any sort. In England, to be precise, a man and woman are lawful husband and wife when—and only when—they have consented to fulfil the conditions and to observe the formalities recognised in English courts of justice as constituting marriage. And this is the case whether both or either be Christian, Jew, Shaker, or Secularist. The law accepts in England specified forms only, and has strictly limited these forms.

If every sect or communion could devise its own forms, appeal to its own register, and compel the judges of the land to recognise these, confusion and uncertainty would result from the infinite variety of religious congregations and the more or less casual character of each local register. Courts of justice would be involved in endless inquiries as to whether any legal marriage had been performed at all; what persons were legitimate, married, or single; and what was a competent record of any given wedlock. The State has the highest possible interest in securing public formalities, simple and notorious acts in law, and an unimpeachable record of the law, such as could not be mislaid or tampered with. Whatever else is done, the State is bound to insist on some definite, public, uniform rite or set of rites.

In the heyday of Churches the matter was very simple. The whole nation, or an immense majority of it, accepted the Church rite, and the State adopted that act as its own. It constituted the priest its own Registrar, and gave legal effect to the parish book. The civil law of the State practically accepted the ecclesiastical law of the Church, and the partnership worked, on the whole, sufficiently well. Scandals, confusion, and anomalies arose, and these were from time to time dealt with by legal decision or by legis-

lation. The State treated the parson as its own official; put him under very severe penalties in case of any irregularity; prescribed hours, licences; constituted lay courts for marriage law; and in effect amalgamated the State formality and Church ceremonial.

This worked fairly well so long as the whole nation practically adhered to one Church, or accepted the State Church as its own. The reformed Church of England seized on the privileges of the Catholic Church, and at once found the marriage law a potent engine of spiritual ascendency. But the whole case was altered when dissenting sects began to multiply; and still more when a resolute minority revolted from any theological communion. The cry of civil and religious liberty was raised in all quarters in such menacing tones that legislation had to interfere. And legislation has at present stopped at the weak and indecorous compromise that we now see. The Catholic Church, with its growing strength and pretensions, is very naturally indignant that the Established priests should monopolise their ancient privilege of performing legal marriage without the intervention of a State official, and it indemnifies itself by treating the State official with studied contempt, which it must be said that a common clerk, busy only about his fees, cheerfully accepts.

Every concession made to this or that powerful community stimulates the rival sects to ask for the same. Public opinion is not yet prepared to put Catholic priests and Shaker expounders on the same legal footing as the Rector of the Parish. Nor could the law courts accept any bit of paper which professed to record a marriage as performed by the local shoemaker in what Churchmen so insolently call "a hedge-side tin tabernacle," or, indeed, for that matter, in a common public-house by the publican himself.



There are a thousand communions which profess to have their own religious ideas. They all object to special privileges being conferred on any of their rivals. To give them all equal rights of celebrating legal marriage would turn law into a quagmire and law-courts into a bear-garden. There can be no peace whilst this growing and burning problem is left open. It goes down to the root question of an Established Church, and forms one of its hopeless dilemmas.

To one plain and simple solution we must come. Whatever else is done, the State must insist on its own independent, uniform, lay act in the law: distinct from any religious rite, and not affected by any religious rite, antecedent, subsequent, or simultaneous. The State must have its own official, its own distinct ceremony, its own national register, and its own absolute record in its own keeping. With all this duly done and witnessed — valid, unimpeachable marriage is concluded in the eye of the State and in judgment of law. Without this—no marriage, no legitimacy, no legal consequences from any pretended ceremony of marriage. No citizen need in the eye of the law do more: but no citizen can be married with less. With this, before this, after this, any citizen can perform any ceremony, take any sacrament, or conform to any ritual that suits his conscience and that his own religious communion pleases to offer him. He may take a dozen sacraments and go through a series of different ceremonies (as a noble pair is said to have done, alas! unsuccessfully!). But of that the law will know nothing. That is between himself and his spiritual advisers.

It is ridiculous to pretend that this legal ceremony can be a hardship on Churchmen, or that it is putting pressure on their conscience to compel them to appear before a lay representative of the State. They can

hardly deny that marriage has in the eye of the law and for purposes of civil society a lay aspect, civil effects, and purely legal incidents. If they desire courts of justice to give effect to the rights and obligations of husband and wife, parent and child, to regulate rights of inheritance, and to define legitimacy and bastardy, they cannot complain if the State requires these lay and legal results of the *status* produced by marriage to be officially confirmed, witnessed, and recorded.

It is as silly to complain of compulsory civil marriage as it would be to complain of compulsory execution by deed of a binding marriage settlement. It would be idle to ask a court of justice to accept the oral evidence of a priest as to a verbal settlement of an estate at the altar. And it would be idle to maintain that the conscience of bride and bridegroom was wounded because a solicitor insisted on their executing a deed on parchment. Civil effects in law ought to follow from lay acts in the law. And it is as childish to talk about conscience, when for purely civil purposes bride and bridegroom are called to appear before an officer of the State, as it would be to talk about conscience when he or she are required to give evidence before a magistrate. We shall be told next that these tender consciences forbid them to make a legal will, and that judges must take in lieu of a last testament the recollections of the clergyman who attended at the bedside. Perhaps it is an unholy act to register the birth of a child before a lay official, and conscience requires Churchmen to do it only before a priest in baptism.

We know very well what is behind all this transparent hypocrisy. What Churchmen, whether Anglican or Catholic, want to come to is this, that there can be no marriage without the sacerdotal



consecration and the theological sacrament. They want to seize upon the fundamental institution of civil society as an indirect engine of spiritual propaganda. This is merely the old mediæval intolerance which we have swept away for ever. It is Torquemada and James II. and the rest of the persecuting fanaticism in a new form. Here we will fight it out to the death. Marriage is the great universal foundation of human society. And we will never suffer it to be degraded into being made the back-door into any Church.

The wise and simple principle of the Civil Code of France is necessary and applicable to all Western Europe; and the practice of France is a model and example to civilised nations. Even in France, the civil marriage is greatly deficient in dignity and in uniformity. In England it is made a squalid scramble. What is needed is to invest the legal ceremony of marriage with all the solemnity of a trial before a judge of the High Court. If Churchmen complain of having to attend a common clerk in a frowsy office, the answer is that civil marriage ought to be made as impressive and artistic as a marriage in Church; and the Registrar should be made an officer of equal rank with a priest. During the Commonwealth, Oliver would himself, as head of the State, perform the marriage ceremony, in full uniform with his Bible and sword before him. We should not like the King in epaulets to marry us; but the idea is suggestive, and Oliver was a genuine Independent or spiritual anarchist. After the legal ceremony, the couple would be perfectly free to resort to any religious ceremony, or to none. They may defer the religious ceremony as long as they please, or celebrate it as often or in any way they please. They may treat the civil marriage as null and void in the sight of God and the Church. That is

their affair. But the State will treat any mere religious ceremony as *per se* null and void, so far as civil rights and obligations are concerned.

In the meantime let it be understood that to Positivists the religious marriage is a matter of religious duty. To Positivists, Marriage is a *Sacrament*—a sacrament of profound importance and inestimable value. By *sacrament* they mean the solemn and public pledge to fulfil a social, personal, and religious duty. In the sanctity, indissolubility, sacramental efficacy of Marriage, Positivists can yield to no Churchman, Protestant or Catholic. To this aspect of the great institution I now turn. My first purpose was only to maintain as the rational solution of a social dilemma, Civil Marriage first—independent, obligatory, and uniform.



VII

RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE

THE great institution of Marriage has necessarily a double character—legal and religious; and this double character must be guaranteed by two distinct authorities and by separate rites and forms. The legal character of Marriage is indispensable, uniform for all, and concerns society, the family relations, and property. The religious character of Marriage depends on the choice of the married pair, may vary according to their conscience and communion, and ought to be entirely independent of the State and its officials. The attempt to combine these two sides of Marriage in the same act, to make either of them dependent on the other, to fuse them in the same ceremony, is retrograde and full of abuses. It has caused continual strife; and, as the decay of the Churches increases, it is certain to cause far wider convulsions.

The entrance of a new life into the community or into the Church, the exit of a life from society and its passing into the world of the departed—birth and death,—also have their double character, their official and their religious formalities; and no one attempts to confound them. The State registers the birth, and it registers the death, of every one of its citizens according to certain legal forms and by the hand of

its own servants. It leaves the family of the infant, or of the deceased, entirely free to choose its own form of baptismal or of burial service, to conduct them at any time and in any mode they please, or else to dispense with religious service altogether. Precisely the same rules should apply to Marriage.

But, though Positivists are the first to insist on Civil Marriage as paramount, obligatory, and uniform for all who marry within the State, they are consistent in upholding quite as resolutely the Religious Marriage, the sacrament of Marriage, and the sacerdotal consecration of this great indissoluble bond of society. This is a cardinal illustration of the foundation idea of Positivism—the separation and co-ordinate authority of temporal and spiritual powers; coercive government on the one hand, and moral and intellectual control on the other hand. In the decay of social organisations, Positivists stand almost alone in being equally strenuous supporters of both. There are many schools, both absolutist and socialist, who uphold the coercive powers of the State; and there are many religionists, both Catholic and mystical, who wish to strengthen the power of some Church. Positivists (almost alone) desire at once a strong State and an independent Church.

Positivists are certainly alone, amongst the non-theological schools of opinion, in seeking to make the religious character of Marriage both more definite and more impressive, in treating it as a very real sacrament, in making it a cardinal feature of the religious life. The only criticism that they offer to the ecclesiastical view of Marriage is, that all existing Christian Churches treat Marriage far too loosely, do not respect its sacramental importance, and allow it to be regarded as a civil state primarily and chiefly. Even the Catholic Church is far too ready to play fast and loose with its "dispensations" to the high and mighty, fails to rise



to its real spiritual dignity, does not treat it as "indissoluble" in the spiritual sense, and has dishonoured it by the vicious institution of celibacy of the priesthood.

As to other Christian Churches, they have made no effective stand against the demoralising progress of Divorce: indeed, in many parts both of the Old and the New World they acquiesce in a practice of Divorce carried to the point of reducing marriage to a union during pleasure. The Anglican marriage service is futile and undignified almost to the point of being a public scandal. And there is hardly any side of the religious action of the Christian Churches where they are more manifestly in arrear of the best moral and spiritual ideas of the age, than in their obsolete, insincere, and unctuous language as to Marriage.

We say that Marriage is a *Sacrament*, meaning by that old Roman term for a *public pledge of faithfulness*, the pledge given by the wedded pair that they will love, serve, and honour each other, and also the Providence that they acknowledge as surrounding their lives. The public ceremonial, the presence of their friends and fellow-believers, consecrates this obligation they take, invests it with public acceptance, and dedicates it anew to the Human Family.

"Marriage," says Auguste Comte, "is the simplest and most perfect mode of man's social life: the only society we can ever form, where entire identity of interests obtains. It is a union wherein each is necessary to the moral development of the other; the woman surpassing the man in tenderness, even as the man excels the woman in strength.

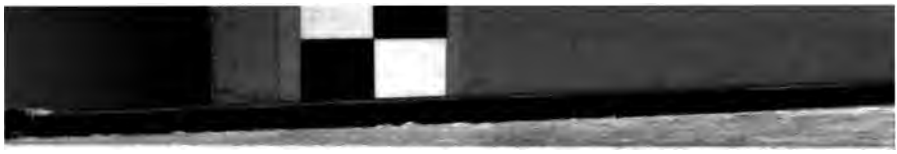
"Marriage joins together two beings to the mutual perfecting and service of each other, by a bond which no shadow of rivalry can darken. Its essential purpose is to bring to completeness the education of the heart. Attachment, in which it begins, leads on to the spirit of reverence, and that to the practice of goodness; each spouse is in turn protector and protected; the one being richer in affection, as the other in force.

"When two beings so complex and yet so different as man

and woman are united together, the whole of life is hardly long enough for them to know each other fully and to love each other perfectly.

"The marriage bond is the only one in which none can share, and which none can put asunder; and so it outlasts even death itself. For time which tends to weaken all other domestic ties, does but cement more closely this one—the only human union of which we can say: 'These two shall be one.'"

The Positivist Marriage seeks to impress these truths on the pair themselves and on all others who attend the ceremony: teaching that Marriage, rightly understood, is the great social instrument of religion; the final act of moral education for the man and for the woman; the link between Person and Humanity; the stepping-stone from the individual self to the social community. The Home, centred in Marriage, is the image or rudimentary type of Humanity, with its mottoes of *Love*, *Order*, and *Progress*—Love being the originating principle of marriage; Order, or the due ordering of the Home and its mutual duties the basis; the moral progress of husband and wife in mutual sympathy and co-operation being the end of Marriage. The two dangers which beset marriage in our own day are—first, the increasing facilities for Divorce; and secondly, the increasing tendency of women to forsake the moral direction of the Family and of the Home for the vain competition in the practical labour of man. There is everywhere in democratic societies a movement to render Divorce common, and re-marriage a matter of course. And the note of modern free-thought is the assimilation of all functions of man and woman. Both tendencies must be fatal to true marriage. The first saps the very idea of *permanent* union; the second poisons the moral purpose of Marriage itself. The task of Positivism is to restore the institution of Marriage which even



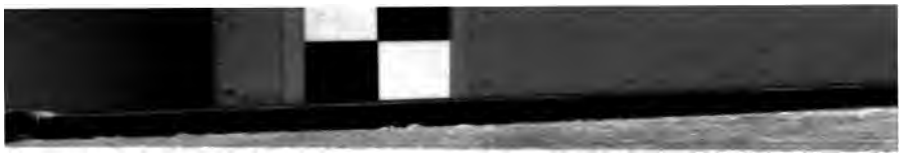
Catholic Christianity does not adequately defend. Its essential conditions are: the exclusive and indissoluble form of Marriage, and the setting free the wife to be the moral Head of the Home.

Marriage is the eternal devotion of one man to one woman—a bond which no one can put asunder and which normally should survive death itself. To reject this last condition is to deny the continuance of a spiritual life for a day beyond the limits of corporal life on earth. Any view of the prolongation of a moral and spiritual being beyond death must necessarily involve the spiritual prolongation of the Marriage union. We have abstained both at Newton Hall and in Paris from exacting any formal Pledge from those who accept Positivist Marriage that they will never enter into a second union: for we are not prepared to impose vows on a distant future. We leave the married pair free to act on their mature judgment by the light of a free conscience, impressing on them at the great crisis of their moral life, in the very ceremony of Marriage itself, that this obligation of indissoluble Marriage is bound up with the foundation of our faith.

The Marriage Service which has been used in Newton Hall thus sums up our conception of this institution:—

> May this new Home be a source of Happiness and Goodness within, of strength and an example without. May the Master of this new Household make it a pattern of Industry, Good Order, and Moral Well-being, in all the acts of a good citizen and a just Head of an honourable Family. May the Mistress of this new household make it a pattern of Tenderness, Purity, and Devotion, in all the things that belong to true and perfect wife. And if this Household shall hereafter be blessed with children, may they be trained up in all things that belong to love and goodness; first by their Mother, then by both Parents equally, till at last they be worthy to enter into the

training and the Service of Society. Thus we would trust that all the great principles of our Faith may be here expressed and illustrated afresh. May all they of this Household, resting on good Order, inspired by Love, and striving after moral Improvement, be seen for ever to *Live for others*, and, as they *Live openly*, may they live in the spirit of *Order and of Progress*—so that a new and worthy Family may be this day added to our country; imaging to us all, whilst it realises and prospers in, the great life of Humanity itself.



VIII

MARRIAGE LAW CONFLICTS

THE questions about Civil and Religious Marriage are again in an acute stage, and have received a new phase by the important decision of the present Bishop of London, that he will visit with his displeasure any of his clergy who should celebrate the remarriage of a person against whom a decree of divorce has been pronounced. By this act it would seem that the Church takes up a ground opposed to that of the law and also to that of average current opinion. The marriage law and the law courts put no difficulty in the way of the remarriage of any divorced person; and public opinion certainly favours it, especially where it promises a new life of happiness, or an act of reparation. It may surprise some readers to be told that the Positivist theory of marriage offers the only reasonable and final solution of this problem. And it may surprise them still more to be told that the Positivist in this matter sides with the Churchman and the Catholic against any religious consecration of such a marriage.

The revival of bitter controversies about remarriage after divorce, or with a sister of a deceased wife, makes it opportune to review the whole problem:—

1. Marriage has a double character: legal and religious.

2. There should therefore be a double ceremony, each quite distinct.

3. The legal ceremony must be compulsory, uniform, general.

4. The religious ceremony should conform to the rules accepted by the communion to which the parties belong, or to the individual conscience.

5. The religious ceremony should be entirely at the option of the parties.

6. It should have no legal effect or conditions.

7. Every communion, and every minister, should be equally free to confer or to withhold such ceremony.

The bitter struggle about the law of marriage arises from the effort to combine the legal and the religious side of marriage in a single rite. The State still hands over one of its fundamental duties to a number of contending sects. The Church still strives to maintain an obsolete monopoly, and to enforce the substitution of a theological for a political sanction. Both State and Church are dishonoured by the struggle. Law, order, and consciences are equally offended.

I. The State has the highest interest in maintaining a uniform, public, simple form of lawful marriage. Property, family rights, personal duties and liabilities, all hang thereon. In the battle of a hundred sects and the growing distrust of theology, it is a fatal error for the State to abdicate its task in favour of discordant Churches, and to suffer them to keep its registers. The State is bound to require as a condition of legal marriage a definite, public, uniform rite. To this the State must eventually resort.

II. To a very large majority of English men, and to almost all English women, marriage seems to demand a religious sanction of some kind, over and



above any legal sanction. This is entirely the Positivist theory and settled practice. And the religious character of marriage is carried even further by us than by any Christian Church.

III. As the legal consequences of marriage upon property, family, and personal rights are necessarily binding on all persons whatever their opinions, religion, or Church, the legal rite must be obligatory, uniform, and technical, with a ceremony at once simple, official, and formal. It is an idle prejudice, or an insolent pretension, to assert that submitting to this legal formality can offend conscience any more than an official certificate of birth or of death. Birth, marriage, death are events of which the interests of the public demand strict official registration and publicity. For any Church to demand that the legal character of marriage can only be created by religious consecration is an arrogant remnant of superstition.

IV. Every community which attaches any value to religion in any form will naturally insist on giving a religious character to marriage. The effects of marriage both on personal life and social relations are so obvious and important that marriage is necessarily bound up with the root ideas of religion in any form. Positivism not only actively supports the essentially religious character of marriage, but it seeks to develop this religious character in ways unattempted by any Church, even by the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages. In the first place, Positivism not only frankly accepts the lay ceremony of legal marriage as indispensable, but insists on it as a necessary preliminary rite. Next, it insists on the purely voluntary character of the religious ceremony—voluntary on both sides,—the Church being as free to refuse, as the parties are free to dispense with, any religious consecration, if they please.

To Positivists, Marriage, in its religious side, is a *Sacrament*—meaning thereby a public pledge by the wedded pair that they will love, serve, and honour each other, whereon the consecration of the Church, so far representing Humanity, is publicly bestowed on them to stimulate their good intentions. This consecration, or *sacrament*, is not conferred as of course, or as a mere legal formula. Almost every Church, Catholic or Protestant, consents to marry persons of notorious evil lives, or even hardened criminals. The motive, no doubt, is the idea that marriage obviates sin, and the Church, by exercising its function of marrying, asserts its own ascendency in private and public life. The Positivist Church, disclaiming any such idle pretensions, and fully recognising the primary function of the State to order the conditions of legal marriage, is free to judge whether a religious consecration should properly be added to the legal rite. There is in this no hardship on the parties, and no abandonment to sin if such consecration is refused, for the legal rite is open to all and is sufficient for every secular interest. The Christian Churches, however, as a matter of course, perform the marriage ceremony for adulterers and rogues indiscriminately. And a parson of the Establishment can hardly exercise any discretion in the matter. The Positivist Church, on the other hand, is perfectly free to exercise an efficient moral discipline over those whose consciences it binds.

As to the burning questions of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, or the marriage of divorced persons, the position of the Positivist Church is perfectly simple. It does not extend the religious consecration to any second marriage whatever, and consequently for the Positivist Church neither question has any place. All second marriages remain



the exclusive affair of the State, and Positivists frankly acknowledge the legal marriage performed by a State functionary to be perfectly adequate and binding in law. I am not aware that Positivism has ever expressed any collective opinion as to marriage with a deceased wife's sister. As to the marriage of divorced persons, Positivism does not favour divorce at all, except in the case of a criminal condemned to penal servitude for life, as does French law. It is not necessary here to enlarge on the Positivist doctrine that true marriage should be indissoluble even by death. The whole of this rests on the principle of subjective immortality, or the survival of the soul in the spirit of others. Positivism offers no bar to the legal remarriage of those whose consorts are dead; but it does not offer religious consecration to any re-marriage in that or any other condition. So far as I know, the Positivist rite of marriage has never yet been celebrated in the case of any second marriage, either in this country or abroad. Remarriage has been left to the law, with which Positivist religion does not affect to interfere.

The very large question of the persistence of the marriage bond even after the death of one spouse, a point on which the Religion of Humanity goes far beyond the Catholic Church in its reverence for the sanctity of marriage, is a matter too large and complex to be touched on here. It is bound up with the Positivist ideal of marriage in its most sacred and profound type. The marriage rite as frequently performed in Newton Hall repeats the emphatic words of Auguste Comte thereon, but neither in Newton Hall, nor by Pierre Laffitte in Paris, has any pledge not to marry again been ever demanded of the married pair.

The bitter controversies we see to-day can only be

closed in one way—the recognition of the double character of marriage by a double and distinct rite, first legal, and then religious. Positivists heartily support those who claim the freedom of a simple legal rite as adequate and conclusive. They as heartily support the claim of the Churches to enforce their own freedom to give or withhold religious consecration upon any such marriage. It is a striking example of the power of the great Positivist principle—the independence and separation of temporal and spiritual authority.



IX

FUNERAL RITES

THE question of funeral rites and the disposal of the dead is one which touches Religious Reformers in a very special degree. To all who are simply nominal adherents to any theological communion, or to all who are simply indifferent as to all rites, creeds, or customs in relation to the dead, no question arises. They are content to leave such things to those who come after them, or to those who care to occupy themselves with concerns of the kind. The mere Agnostic has nothing to suggest, nothing to object: he is usually interred with Christian rites: and eminent Agnostics, when pressed as to their wishes, have been known to reply—What can it matter to me what they like to do with my bones?

Positivists are in a very different case. They are not indifferent in things religious: they are not content simply to conform with the lip or to bow the knee in the Temple as a conventional form: they are not Agnostics, in the sense that the Agnostic is one who plants himself firmly on the rock of Ignorance. Positivists profess to have a religious faith, adequate to guide them in the problems of life and death. Though they have no set ritual, they have a decided sense of the deep reaction of public expression upon

inward convictions. They seek to emphasise all the great phases of human life in their relations to the social communion, above all the relation of the living to the dead. The Religion of Humanity is, on one side of it, a rationalised and spiritualised Worship of the Dead, in so far as it seeks to order the life of man by reference to the Past, Present, and Future of Mankind. We must, therefore, regard it as one of its prime duties to invest with a religious sanction the close of life, and the rational disposal of the dead by the reverent care of the living.

Theological opinion, indeed current opinion, is wont to regard the disposal of the dead as a practical test of conviction. A man who is willing to pass out of the world with theological blessings and to be buried with priestly rites is popularly supposed to be "reconciled" to the true Church, whatever may have been his avowed opinions in his days of health and strength. And in the Sacramental Communions fraud, cruelty, and force in securing such death-bed reconciliation are thought to be venial acts of piety, as if a man could be saved from hell-fire by some miraculous talisman or hypodermic injection.

There are special difficulties that confront all non-Christians. The law permits only "Christian" Services in parish graveyards, and most of the available cemeteries are controlled by Boards and clergy nervously afraid of any innovation, of anything which might cause public discussion and affect dividends.

Agnostics are said to be at liberty to put their departed brethren in the ground without the intervention of a priest and without a word spoken. But anything said or done must depend on the sufferance and accidental consent of trustees and committees who are often timid and prejudiced. As to cemeteries of their own, or even parts of cemeteries under their



own control, Religious Reformers are as yet not sufficiently numerous, and not locally near each other so as to make this feasible. They ought to bear in mind that, unless they choose in their lifetime to give very distinct and formal directions as to their own burial, they may become the object of conventional rites which cannot be anything but a mockery of their own professions, and which must cast a certain public slur on their sincerity or their foresight.

It is impossible to enter into details or lay down any general rules for guidance in such a matter. Each case depends on its own special circumstances of family, place of residence, property in a particular grave, and various personal conditions. The only general advice that can be given is for individuals carefully to think out their own case, and try to realise what might happen upon his or her sudden death. And then, having carefully thought out the probable conditions and defined their own wishes, their duty is to put these wishes in definite instructions, and make these instructions known to and immediately accessible to their near relations or friends. Old-fashioned and half-hearted people fondly imagine that they have done enough when they can say to themselves "that they have provided for this in their will." That would be a very poor security to trust. It may do for persons with settled estates, mausoleums of their own, and family solicitors. In other cases arrangements for a funeral are often made within twenty-four hours, long before any will is seen or heard of. It is quite proper, even for those who have but small estates to dispose of, to make a legal will as to their last wishes, and to embody in this precise directions as to burial. But in most cases this latter will prove idle words, unless these directions are known to, or

easily and always accessible by, the immediate family. In making these directions we have to remember that any sort of public participation in interment by friends, and any attempt to speak in their name, must absolutely depend on the sufferance or accidental inadvertence of the authorities for the moment controlling the graveyard or cemetery. Priests are not disposed to surrender one tittle of their exclusive rights over "consecrated" ground. They have often an indirect control over the other portion of a public cemetery; and non-Christians or Agnostics have no "rights"—except the right to put their departed friends in the ground without a word.

Anything in the shape of a non-Christian ceremony at the graveside is thus practically out of the question—partly because it must be at the will of changeable and timid Boards whose main ideas are commercial, tempered by prejudice and convention; partly because our climate prohibits anything but a few hurried sentences, not seldom uttered in a storm or in the midst of a most unedifying scramble, which, in the case of a person known to the public, sometimes becomes a mob. The Continental practice of a set of "orations" over the coffin is justly odious to English habits, and is repulsive to all sense of religion and reverence. It often degenerates into an irritating form of political manifesto or meeting. The use of the Nonconformist "Chapel" depends, like everything in the commercial cemeteries, on the temporary sufferance of the Board; and it is usually quite as distinctly marked with biblical emblems and associations as any church, with the further objection of being bare and ugly. A rite in a "Chapel," which professes to be evangelical but not ecclesiastical, is necessarily an uncomfortable makeshift in a wrong place.



I cannot see that burial can be more of a domestic concern than marriage, or the presentation of a child, or the consecration of any function or office. On the contrary, it seems to me far more a public concern than any other act of our lives, and such is the instinct and practice of mankind in all ages. Positivism, in what Comte has called *sacraments*, has immensely increased the claim of religion to impress with a social and solemn meaning each act in the drama of human life, and that even more for its reaction on the community than its effect on the person himself. We cannot, even if we would, reduce to a purely domestic concern, as if it were an incident like disease or the loss of income, the last passing away from the sight of men, and the last farewell of those who would bring to so momentous an occasion their tribute of love and honour. Funeral rite of some kind there must be, unless we are to crush out the spontaneous sentiments of natural man.

Under these circumstances, it seems to me that the obvious and inevitable course is to look for some kind of funeral rite to evolve itself in that place in which the ordinary meetings may be held. There the deceased has been accustomed to join with his fellow-believers, and there, with all the associations and habits of the place, they can, without disturbance or conflicting emotions, take a last farewell of their friend and colleague. In my opinion the presence of the body, or, at least, of the urn containing the cremated ashes, is a very important and natural element of anything which is to distinguish a funeral ceremony from a memorial speech. In the next Essay I have considered cremation, a practice which I hold to be really indispensable for the social and religious disposal of the dead, and the only mode in which, under the conditions of our city life, we can visibly

retain their dust in our midst. I am quite aware of the practical difficulties which surround us. But many of these difficulties, it seems to me, spring from our inveterate habits of placing personal and domestic considerations above our social duties and loyalty to our faith.



X

CREMATION

THERE is a grave duty incumbent on all who are not genuine Christian believers to provide for the decent disposal of their own remains in a manner worthy of the faith they profess, and I have touched on some of the special difficulties that they have to meet. It is not necessary to enlarge on the very intimate way in which the end of objective life and the continuance of subjective life after death is bound up with the Religion of Humanity, and how greatly that Religion tends to consecrate the social obligations involved in every marked stage of our active life upon earth. The close of every worthy life puts the seal upon the whole career amongst our fellow-men, and opens to each of us a new and continuous existence, even on this earth, in the memories and influences we leave to survivors and descendants—a continuous existence no less solemn, and far more real, than the glorified indolence of the conventional Heaven. In point of fact, there can be no religious duty of deeper significance in the Religion of Humanity than the solemn commemoration of the final close of our visible career on earth, and the inauguration of the invisible and unlimited career of our communion with the vast organism of civilised Humanity, into which every

worthy life is incorporated, and by which and through which alone Humanity itself exists, works, thinks, and lives.

It is hardly necessary to show that any such commemoration must have a social, a public, at the very least some congregational, character. The instinct and practice of mankind in all ages and under all religions, suffice to prove that we cannot limit the disposal of the dead to a purely domestic concern, as if it were the birthday or the sickness of some private person which need affect no one outside the family. The fellow-believers of every active non-Christian religionist are deeply concerned in the close of his active co-operation in their midst, and in the opening of his spiritual and purer influence over them and their descendants in memory and in result. It would be an outrage on the deepest sympathies of mankind if we attempted to proscribe any kind of ceremonial rite, any gathering of the friends and colleagues of the dead person together to take farewell of their friend and to give expression to all they feel of honour and of regret. Funeral rite of some public kind is a necessity of human nature. It is urgent to consider how best to adapt such a rite to our circumstances and our faith.

The Burials Act has been expressly worded to exclude any ceremony in "consecrated" ground not of a Christian kind, and this limitation must be carefully considered as strictly excluding non-Christian interment in "consecrated" ground, *i.e.* in any burial-ground under the control of priests, unless with the degrading condition of complete silence. Even in "unconsecrated," *i.e.* in public, burial-grounds, the use of any chapel is purely permissive, undetermined, and subject to theological associations. It seems to follow that, until non-Christian communities possess burial-grounds of their own, with



their own chapels attached to them, they must either accept such housing on sufferance as they may chance to find, or else they must hold any definite funeral rite they choose to have in their own place of ordinary meeting. There are very considerable difficulties at present in the way of any of these courses.

The enormous extent of the continuous tract of houses called London, and the distance of most of the cemeteries outside of even this vast area; the scattered residences of fellow-citizens and fellow-believers in this London (often at distances of ten or twelve miles from each other); the fact that many of them have family graves in different places and have laid dear ones in these graves at different times; the objections we all naturally feel to run counter to family affections and traditions where husband and wife, parent and child, do not share a common faith,—all these things must retard the institution of anything like a common non-Christian cemetery with appropriate buildings for any funeral rite. On the other hand, to transport the body in its coffin from the house of death to the central Hall, and thence to carry it back to some outlying cemetery, may often involve a very fatiguing and costly journey, amounting in the whole to twenty or thirty miles, beside a very serious demand on the strength and leisure time of men and women who are often overworked and seldom rich.

I have a very strong feeling that anything that professes to be a funeral rite, but is carried out in the absence of the remains in some form or other, ceases to be a funeral rite, and inevitably becomes either a criticism or an eulogium of the deceased. I have myself been called upon to speak on the death of persons both public and private on not a few occasions, and I have also been called on to conduct a funeral ceremony over the coffined remains both at interment

and at cremation. And I am sensible how widely different is the state of mind of the speaker and the whole tone of the ceremony, when the body lies in presence of the community, and when it is absent and already interred. The first is truly a funeral rite; the second is too often a memorial discourse. The former is a religious ceremony; it is difficult to prevent the latter being more than a literary criticism. Here, then, is a very serious dilemma that confronts all non-Christian communities. The present state of the law and of public opinion prevents them from carrying out their own ceremony in church burial-grounds, unless with "maimed rites," and under very narrow limits. The practical difficulties of carrying the remains across the unwieldy areas of modern cities are very serious. And yet a commemoration of the deceased in complete absence of the remains becomes a more or less critical discourse about the good or bad qualities of the dead person. It is in danger of becoming an idle and not very candid eulogy, or else a cold and not very sympathetic criticism. To the outside public it risks sounding untrue; to the intimate friends it risks sounding unkind.

Now, here, I believe a way out of the dilemma may be found in the growing practice of Cremation. I have often urged the adoption of this most ancient and natural of all modes of disposing of the dead. To non-Christians it offers peculiar opportunities. It is obviously the only way in which men can dispose of the corpse with absolute security to the health of the living. And the Religion of Humanity has at its base the religious obligation of physical health, and protests against the morbid follies of theological uncleanness and pollution. In the next place, with the enormous development of our overgrown cities, Cremation offers the only mode in which for most



of us the sacred remains of those we love and honour can be retained in any reasonable proximity for access and visible devotion.

It is all very well for a solitary member of a family to contrive a burying-place within reach of his own actual residence. Alas! in the practical conditions of modern life we are frequently changing our residence, and our children are constantly obliged to separate from their old home and are scattered across a huge area. There are no permanent homes, no fixed localities in modern life, and the attempt to make a permanent family grave is as impracticable for most of us as to make a permanent family home. Lastly, the presence of the remains is an essential part of any true funeral rite. And this condition is often a practical impossibility to a non-Christian rite of a complete kind. Here Cremation offers us a practicable alternative.

Burial, unless under very special and costly provisions, necessitates the funeral ceremony within a few days of death, with all the difficulties of burial arrangements and fatiguing calls on the family and friends. With resort to Cremation, the congregational gathering and so-called public ceremony may well be delayed for weeks. I would very much prefer that any funeral rite should be held in presence of the actual corpse, and that this rite should be single and accomplished once for all. The *Crematorium*, with its quiet ground and decorous chapel, offers every facility for a religious rite that any church possesses, without any distinctive sectarian emblem or character. But there are many cases in which the committal of the body to the furnace and the public consecration of the ashes in their urn may be separated in time, in place, and in form. It may be convenient to make the act of Cremation an immediate, simple, and even purely

domestic task. All the details and requirements for this have been carefully formulated by the Cremation Society, to which its President, the great surgeon Sir Henry Thompson, gave so much labour.

The papers and instructions prepared under his eye explain the vast social importance and the indispensable conditions of proper Cremation. When the ashes have been collected and placed in the cinerary urn, we have the corporal remains of the dead one more truly before us, and far more sympathetically present to our minds, than if the putrescent body were lying distorted in its narrow case. There is neither difficulty nor cost in removing this urn from place to place, nor in consigning it ultimately to some accessible place of repose. It is forgotten that the cremated ashes in their urn can be dealt with exactly as the corpse is in burial. It may be placed in a churchyard, or cemetery, or church, or cloister, or in any public resting-place, with or without a solid monument, without danger to any one, and without inconvenience or cost, and happily without the indescribable horrors of the lead coffin and the brick vault. We are told that a recent burial in the Abbey was the interment not of the body, but of the cremated ashes. Cremation is simply a scientific method of preparing a corpse for entombment—without the foolish elaboration of embalming, or the ghastly absurdities of high-class interment. All that we associate with burial, the venerable churchyard, or the church itself, the Campo Santo, or the "Old Yew" of the poet, are just as possible after Cremation as after interment.

To non-Christians the practice of Cremation offers a solution of the funeral dilemma, where it is practically impossible to arrange a funeral ceremony over the corpse itself in the coffin. If this be held in presence of the ashes in their urn, there is time for



any arrangement which may be desired, the remains can be brought to any spot where the ceremony is held without trouble or cost, and the scientific Religion of Humanity will give a new proof of its power to reconcile science with reverence, to bind the living to the dead, and to have equal thought of the Past and of the Future of mankind.

XI

CENTENARIES

THIS is an age of Commemorations of the great men of the Past. It is true that there are always weak souls who are ready to go off into false enthusiasms for doubtful and very minor heroes. And there are always busybodies and adventurers eager to snatch at any occasion for advertising themselves and running some purely local demonstration. So there are in things of Religion, Patriotism, Loyalty, Philanthropy, Science, or Art. Indeed in most good things, and in most right practices, there are bores and hypocrites who have their own objects in beating the gong outside their own booth, and seeking to flog up the public into enthusiasm of a paying sort. But that a good thing, an obvious duty, may be abused, is no good reason for dropping it, and for neglecting a real obligation. And it would be absurd to contend that honour is not a bounden duty towards those from whom all we enjoy in modern life has come down to us, or that there is not great moral use in recalling these high examples and memorable types of a great life. It is simply history teaching men morality and social duty.

There is all the more reason therefore to insist on substantial titles to our reverence before we accept



any suggested commemoration; to be careful that none such degenerate into affectation, or be perverted to private ends. There are, of course, the mean and cynical tempers which are so fearful of being caught by sentiment or imposition that they look with suspicion on any idea of commemorating any great man, just as they abstain on principle from subscribing to a charity or a Presentation. These people, who will not go to church for fear they may be asked to contribute to the plate, must be left to their own consciences. But the fact that foolish admiration, local ambition, and vulgar touting are only too common in this world, makes it a duty for reasonable men to ask for solid guarantees before they commit themselves to any suggested commemoration. To all for whom these occasions are bound up with religion and philosophy, it is all-important to see that those whom we honour are worthy of honour, and that the honour we pay them is given with a grateful heart and sincere conviction.

The Church in its great day insisted on these guarantees with a very firm hand and much wisdom. Before any one was canonised, he or she had to be accepted by authorised sentence, and this could only be pronounced after long and thorough examination. The Church always set itself against any indiscriminate manufacture of Saints, and in its best day was able to suppress any attempt at irregular or dishonest consecration. The offence of the Church was not so much in its liberality of canonisation, as that it recognised only one kind of merit, and that too often of a morbid kind. But in its systematic efforts to prevent posthumous honours being given without examination or on fraudulent grounds, it showed all the moral insight and practical wisdom which kept it for several centuries a great civilising force.

The world now is not willing to refer these questions to Popes and Cardinals, who have long abused the credulity of grateful men; and it is justly indignant that Januarius and Teresa should be saints, whilst Alfred and Jeanne d'Arc are not. But though the Church, even in its best days, neglected nine-tenths of human merit, and made not a few scandalous blunders, and in its worst days has tended to make any "canonisation" whatever a byword, we may still learn from it the essential conditions of any right honouring of the mighty Dead—viz. that such honour be honest, enlightened, and general, and that those we seek to honour are worthy of remembrance from generation to generation.

This was the essential idea of the "Calendar" of great men and women, drawn up by Auguste Comte fifty years ago with the view of impressing on the minds of the present age a table of their chief benefactors in all forms of human power and virtue. It was not intended to be definitive and perpetual; much less was it intended to be exclusive or negative. It has drawn forth warm admiration from J. Stuart Mill, and has served to systematise the judgments of many philosophers and historians who are sometimes shy in acknowledging their real debt to this great synthetic and concrete tableau of human evolution in the sum. At any rate, no other general scheme of classification of the world's greatest "worthies" has ever been suggested; and the pedantry of specialism contents itself, as usual, with academic sneering at particular names. We never pretend that Comte's 558 heroes and heroines bind the future to honour every one of these, much less to honour no others. But it affords men, whether they accept Comte's philosophy or not, an admirable type of the kind of power and of virtue which should be



held for ever in public memory as benefactors of our race.

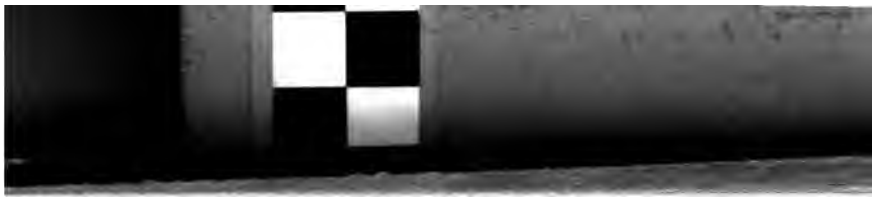
The more I study it the more I am amazed at the genius with which Comte formed so great a series of personal judgments about so vast a variety of achievements and capacities, when we consider his own limited study of special science. As Laffitte told me, when I was wondering how Comte had gained his insight into the spirit of Æschylus, knowing nothing of the tragedies but a bald French prose translation—"these things are possible to genius." Without asserting that all Comte's judgments are just, much less that they bind the future (indeed, he only put it out for the nineteenth century), the scheme in general conception forms a firm and suggestive type.

The idea of connecting a great name with each day of the year was, of course, borrowed from the Catholic Calendar; and the device of adding "subordinates" to many names for leap years enabled Comte to compose a general list of five or six hundred names in graduated scales of four orders. No doubt there are five or six hundred thousand of men and women worthy of our regard, but the human memory and the human faculty of enthusiasm could hardly be stretched so far. One (and occasionally two) names for each day of the week is an ample and reasonable limit. Now, whether or not we accept Comte's scheme of worthies, it is a useful guide to bear in mind that a few hundred names of great men in the past is quite as many as the average man and woman is at all likely to know anything about; and the first question arises on any proposed commemoration, Could it possibly belong to any such list, or could it conceivably be compared with the great names in such a list?

Comte's Calendar of great men, certainly, has

reference to the whole sphere of human history in all its forms, and is designed for the use of Europeans in general. It need not exclude national and even local commemorations in different countries or districts of those to whom each people or any province owe grateful memory. But, even in such purely local commemorations, regard should be had to the wider spheres. It would be mischievous to crowd out the memory of the Alfreds, Cromwells, Shakespeares, and Miltons with a wearisome excess of minor statesmen and poets. In these days when every active mayor or alderman expects to be presented with his portrait (even though he have to pay for it himself), and when every country-town is looking out for the birthplace or the tombstone of some poet or soldier whose name has lived for a hundred years, it is well to remind ourselves that too great prodigality of minor celebrations must end by blunting our interest in those which are a solemn duty and a natural education in themselves.

The year 1899 afforded a crucial example of this truth. It was the eve of the thousandth anniversary of the death of Alfred the Great; the three-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Cromwell, and of the death of Spenser; and the hundredth anniversary of the death of George Washington. For three of these, at any rate, great efforts were made to impress on the imagination of the public all that the world owes to these great creative statesmen. Beside the immortal memories of Alfred, of Cromwell, of Washington, the names of minor poets and politicians fade out of the sky, like the lesser stars in full moonlight. If our commemoration of great men is to be a serious and instructive thing, it is all important to keep in view relative merit and due proportion of contribution to the progress of mankind. To pay fit honour to three such men as Alfred, Cromwell, and Washington, taxed



the enthusiasm of the English-speaking race for one year at least. And till we see our way to carry out such celebrations worthily, we need not burden ourselves with any lesser national heroes. Little Pedlington and Great Mudborough may raise a bust, or deliver orations, for any worthy citizen of their own they may happen to discover; but they should not ask the public to take part in what is in no sense a national possession.

The commemorations of Alfred, of Cromwell, of Washington supply us with excellent lessons of the great educational value that such occasions develop. More has been done recently to teach Englishmen all that they owe to King Alfred than perhaps was done in the thousand years since his death. Here was a ruler to whom England, as a social and national unit, as the land of one special type of soldier and citizen, owed more than to any other single ruler in its entire history; in the fundamental basis of national life and character owed more than to the Conqueror, to Edward I., to Elizabeth, or to Cromwell. He was a man also, who by virtue of his saintly candour of soul, and his literary activity, has enabled us to know him and to know his aims better than we know the aims and the soul of Julius Cæsar or of Charlemagne. Yet the ignorance in the general public of the achievements and aspirations of Alfred was strange; and men calling themselves men of letters were not ashamed to declare that they knew nothing of Alfred except that he burnt the goodwife's cakes. It is to be hoped that something has been done to enable the English people to know more, and to understand better, the greatest, noblest, most perfect of English heroes.

In the same way, much was done in 1899 to stamp on the public mind the true story of Oliver and the great services he rendered to our nation. Scores

of books, addresses, articles, and other memorials have been put forth on the occasion of his Tercentenary; and more has been done to teach the truth about him than in all the years since Carlyle's memorable work appeared. London, which long has had statues of James II., some Duke of Bedford, Disraeli, and half-a-dozen Indian soldiers, but no statue to the greatest citizen England ever bred, has at last an adequate memorial. English history has taken a firmer hold in the public mind, now that the infamous blackening of Cromwell's memory is being adequately redressed. And as to George Washington, though his memory concerns in the main the people of the United States, it is obvious that the sympathy of the English public joins with the honours which the American public pays to one of the noblest examples of soldier and statesman that our race can boast.

There is one condition which ought to be observed in all serious commemorations—to recognise anniversaries of the death, not of the birth of great men. To observe both is needlessly to double the occasions, and to introduce essentially false ideas. The birth of any great man is not a national event, is not an epoch at all, is in no sense a great crisis in history. It is the close of a great career which alone is marked by contemporaries, which alone concerns the world, and which only history need record. Days of birth are private, domestic, or theological festivals. Families may observe the birthdays of their children, or Christians may celebrate the purely fanciful date when God was incarnate in the Virgin's womb. But for practical and human affairs it is the end of life which determines its place in the social world, and such remembrance as it may be worthy to maintain. For all national purposes it is right that we reserve our commemoration for the days of our heroes' death; and that we leave it



to theologians and heralds to commemorate the birth-days of such as may be supposed to have an interest miraculous or genealogical.

Another useful condition would be to recognise only centenaries and not lesser anniversaries—at any rate, excepting in some very special case. A century, of course, is a purely arbitrary period; but so are weeks, and months, and jubilees, and most of our periodical measures. But it is a convenient term. If the memory of any man has lasted fresh, and has gained in force after a hundred years from his death, there is a fair presumption that his fame is real and his services to the public worthy of honour. The centenary of a birth is nothing. Each centenary in succession marks a more definite title to permanent honour. The late Senhor Garcia attended the centenary celebration of his own birth. When we come to Millenaries (there are superfine folk who grumble at the word, though *millenary* is a word quite as correct and quite as plain as *centenary*), they must always be rare indeed. And the millenary of King Alfred offers us a perfect type of a commemoration which is eminently deserved, due by long neglect of ages, morally elevating to those who will observe it, and peculiarly instructive in teaching the best and most important part of history.

XII

MODERN PILGRIMAGES

MUCH attention is now being bestowed on the revived practice of organised visits to historic scenes; and several educational bodies have lately been arranging such collective acts of commemoration and study. Pilgrimages proper (apart from those of Catholic pilgrims) have long been a special feature in the practice of Positivist bodies.

A Pilgrimage with Positivists is always a real commemoration of some worthy servant of Humanity, and its main purpose is to deepen the sense of reverence, and widen our understanding of the services of some great life. It is truly a religious act, and it is also an educational instrument. It is therefore essentially "a service" in itself; it almost necessarily implies an address or discourse to give point to the feelings of veneration, and to develop and illustrate the historical lessons enforced. As the Catholic Pilgrim keeps as a festival St. Paul's Day or St. Lawrence's Day, and visits the tombs or the footprints of martyrs and apostles, so the Positivist visits at Stratford the birthplace and grave of Shakespeare, and listens to the story of his life, and chants the songs he loved. The feeling is really the same. And, if in the Positivist Pilgrimage there are no sackcloth and ashes, no penitential psalms,



no genuflexions or osculations, but, on the contrary, frank enjoyment of beautiful scenes and joyous gathering in a friendly meeting, the difference is due to the far wider and more human form that religion takes in the Positivist scheme than in any superhuman and theological religion. It is obvious that, with the infinite roll of Humanity before us, a Positivist Pilgrimage is a thing far more broad, sociable, instructive, and joyous than it can be to any votary of a celestial world.

Positivist Pilgrimages began in France almost from the time of Comte's death. Indeed, he himself instituted his own solitary weekly Pilgrimage to the grave of his beloved friend. From the day of Comte's death in 1857 until now, his followers have been wont to make genuine pilgrimage to his grave, and now to that of his principal colleagues; and this takes systematic form on the 5th September, the anniversary of his death. M. Laffitte soon began to organise historical Pilgrimages to the birthplace, residence, or tomb of some great name in thought or action, in and near Paris. And our Newton Hall body may claim to have developed the practice in an even more systematic manner.

For many years we have now carried on a series of Pilgrimages having a double object—the commemoration of great men, and the giving a vivid interest in history. On each visit, a discourse is given by some selected speaker on the life, work, character, and services of some chosen hero, over whose bones we are standing, or within sight of his birthplace or home. Such an address is a combination of sermon, biography, and historical lecture, and it lends itself to every mode of religious reverence and of practical study. It is surprising how well the Positivist scheme contributes to this large treatment. Sometimes we visit a church,

an abbey, a palace, a ruin, a site, it may be a gallery of antiquities or of pictures. Sometimes the commemoration takes a musical or even a dramatic form, sometimes a pictorial or antiquarian aspect. But the essence of it is always reverent commemoration of a great benefactor of mankind *plus* systematic study of his life and character.

The list of those whose work we have studied on the sacred spots covered by their memory, or wherein their bones are laid, is curiously long. It comprises Alfred, Cromwell, Milton, Bacon, Harvey, William III., Penn, Shakespeare, Fox, Bunyan, De Foe, Newton, Locke, Goldsmith, Harrison, Halley, Darwin, and many others. The longer journeys were to Stratford-on-Avon, to Paris, to Oxford, Cambridge, Ely, Canterbury, Winchester, Salisbury, some of these visits extending over several days. Frequent visits were also made to the Abbey, the Tower, the Temple, the British Museum, the National Gallery, the South Kensington Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Natural History Museum, Dulwich College, and the Museum of the College of Surgeons. At each of these, some great name or names in philosophy, art, science, or politics, were chosen for commemoration, and a lecture given in sight of their works or in presence of their relics.

I cannot pretend to be more impressionable than my neighbours, but I confess that I have felt a fresh glow of gratitude and admiration for the mighty dead when, under the trees at Horton, where Milton's early life was passed, we read *Comus* in parts; when at Stratford we listened to the fine discourse of Mr. Vernon Lushington, stood over the poet's grave, joined in the service of his parish church, heard the songs from his plays by Anne Hathaway's cottage or under the woods of Charlcote; when at Winchester



we followed up the footprints of Alfred, and spoke of his perfect life; when at Oxford, Cambridge, Canterbury, or in Paris, we visited spots consecrated by the memory of a long series of great men; when in our annual visit to Westminster Abbey, we speak of the dead whose bones lie there, or whose deeds are associated with its records and monuments. These visits are real Pilgrimages—true acts of religious commemoration, quite as sincere and heartfelt as the Pilgrimages to Rome and Lourdes.

It may be that we have no need of mourning dress, or rosaries, groans, tears, and *misereres*. We certainly enjoy the holiday, the lovely groves and gardens, the Cathedrals, the palaces, the galleries we visit with frank and unrestrained delight in beautiful things as such. But a human Religion combines all this, as Greeks and Orientals have ever done, along with genuine reverence; and we add a scientific interest in serious history. Our Pilgrimages have always been planned on a thoroughly popular and simple basis. Upwards of eighty persons went to Stratford, and some of the London visits have comprised even more. Men, women, and children have joined; and persons of all professions, from judges and professors to tailors and seamstresses.

I have nothing but good-will for a holiday trip of any kind, even if it be only Harry and Harriet on donkeys at Hampstead Heath, or "the missus and the baby" on a Gravesend steamboat; and I frankly admit that a crowded third-class carriage on August Bank Holiday is apt to be hot, and the temperance inn at a market-town is apt to get stuffy. But a random holiday trip, a mere excursion "to spend a happy day," cannot be made into a Pilgrimage, nor be worthy of the serious efforts of cultivated men and women—unless it has some definite motive as its

inspiration behind it, which our Newton Hall Pilgrimages have always. A visit to the British Museum, to Hampton Court, or even to Florence, is a very good and pleasant thing if it be well conducted and planned; and much may be learned from it if it be led by competent guides. But a Cook's Tour, even if personally conducted by M.A.'s, M.P.'s, and Professors, will remain a Tour, and cannot be properly described as a Pilgrimage. It is a very good thing, and by all means should be encouraged. But romping —if not horse-play and beer—will press it close, and a holiday jaunt it will remain, with a tendency to the Bean-feast rather than the lecture. The belief and the practice of the Religion of Humanity alone can make a true and serious modern Pilgrimage.

Not a word that I have written has any kind of aim to discourage holiday tours of any sort; and the more of history, of biography, and of art that can be put into a holiday tour the better. But how vastly must the best holiday tour remain inferior, both as inspiration and as education, to a Greek gathering at Olympia, Delphi, or Eleusis; to a Mediæval Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Rome, Assisi, or Canterbury; to a Mussulman Pilgrimage to Mecca; or a Hindoo Pilgrimage to Benares. But all this and more is realised in a Positivist Pilgrimage to Winchester or to Stratford, where still sleep the two greatest of Englishmen, in the spots where a large part of their lives were passed. Positivism in this, as in other things, comes back to this truth — that all great things require as their inspiration some genuine religious idea, and that the truly religious idea is based on reverence for Humanity and all her worthy servants.



XIII

THE USE OF SUNDAY

THE successful institution of "Museum Sunday" offers a good example of the way in which the more enlightened spirits of various religious bodies are finding a common ground; and on that common ground Positivists are always ready to meet them and to work with them. The object of the Sunday Society is not to weaken, much less to abolish, the institution of Sunday, but to restore its use "as a beneficent social institution." And with that aim Positivists most entirely concur, meaning to make Sunday, as it was from antiquity, a spiritual and religious festival.

The history of Sunday and of the Week is singularly interesting, and of no small extent and complexity. A great amount of learning has been expended upon both, and many things are still doubtful and obscure. One set of teachers finds an astronomical origin in the Week; another traces it to the Astrolatry of the Asiatic plains; and others give it a purely Scriptural source. According to Comte, the Week may be traced back to quite primitive times, and has a very general source, essentially based in natural tendencies of the human mind itself. That is to say, in his technical language, the Week is a

subjective institution, and a seventh day of *rest* is a spontaneous conception of natural religion.

There is no need here to dilate on what Comte has said as to the purely *subjective* values of the prime numbers and of *seven*—that is to say, their reaction on the elementary powers of the mind apart from any external observations or concrete applications. He declares that the week of seven days was an institution to which there was a general tendency long anterior to observations of the planets and to settled theocracies. Abstractly considered, the number seven represents the sum of the first three numbers *plus* a copula, or rest. It also consists of three pairs, or of two triads, each followed by a seventh unit. Comte declares that brutes seem to have a sense of three, and so do the lowest savages, not being able to go beyond this number without mechanical aids; and thus, that 1, 2, 3, are conceptions which all minds can grasp apart from observations and without the help of signs. Man, he says, has an instinctive sense of distinctions up to three: higher numeration is the result of effort, reflection, and teaching. Hence the lowest mind can become used to ideas of three pairs, or two triads, followed by a synthesis or rest; but it is liable to be confused, or to need artificial aid, if the enumeration is carried further.

We know by experience how naturally the most careless or the most ignorant can instinctively retain the sense of the beginning, middle, and end of the week; how easily they can remember a recurrence of every second day three times over, and even one of every third day twice, when followed by a pause to distinguish one set of groups from another. If we advance to four or five alternations, or to three or four triads, it involves an effort of thought and reference to a calendar, of which the lowest intelligences are in-



capable. The great rival of the Week is the Decade. But the Decade is a period too long for the most ignorant masses; they could not remember when was its middle or its end. Take a day of rest off the Decade, then the working week of nine days could be divided into three triads—which is too much—but not into pairs at all. The Decade may be divided into pairs or alternations, but not into triads at all. The working week of six days will divide into pairs and into triads, and it is closed by a "*synthesis*"—a pause—a day of rest. The simple groups, the simplest of all groups, pairs and triads, are universally useful, instinctively remembered, and conceivable by the lowest and rudest intelligence. Such is the *subjective* origin of the Week of seven days.

An immense deal of learning has been expended in tracing the origin of the Week to the Planets, to the phases of the Moon, and to the six days of Creation. Unquestionably, the seven days of the Week were, from very ancient times and over vast periods of time, associated with the five great planets known of old *plus* the Sun and the Moon, and they still bear the planetary names. The phases of the Moon have a certain correspondence with the Weeks; and undoubtedly the Jewish ordinances and the Jewish Scriptures have been the most powerful agencies in stereotyping the institution of the Week. It seems quite certain that the six days of Creation were derived in Scriptural story from the six working days of the Week; and not the Week from the Cosmogony. The correspondence of the Week and the phases of the Moon is far from exact; and the Week existed as an institution apart from planetary observations. The truth would seem to be that the Week was a subjective creation of the human mind dealing with the simplest properties of the earliest numbers. But this spontaneous

institution was immensely strengthened—first, by its association with religious observances of New Moons and Full Moons; much later by association with what were called the Seven Planets; and the historical efficiency and social observance of the Week has been immensely stimulated and fortified by the Hebrew Scriptures.

If the Week had a planetary origin, why was it not instituted by the Egyptians who had far greater astronomical interests than the Jews? The Egyptians divided their month by Decades, as did the Greeks. But then the Egyptians paid religious observance to New Moons and Full Moons which involve periods of about a fortnight. To divide this period was to establish the Week. The Roman Calendar, which was (no doubt purposely) kept irregular and complicated, had certain approximations to periods of seven and fourteen days; and these were possibly quite spontaneous. In four months of the Roman year the Nones fell on the seventh day. In the same months, the Ides (*i.e.* the Dividers) fell on the fifteenth day. In the other eight months of the year, the Ides fell on the thirteenth day. And throughout the Roman year there were always seven clear days between the Nones and the Ides. The profoundly basic institution of the Week has been formed and built up by a combination of forces. Originating in the instinctive powers of the human mind, it was strengthened by astrology, developed by scientific astronomy, and consecrated by Holy Writ and the halo of Divine Institution. The history of its long struggle with the Decade and its ultimate triumph over it in the Roman world, the history of its easy victory over the Decade at the French Revolution, form instructive chapters in Social Statics, and also in the part played by popular instinct in the course of Social Dynamics.



The history of Sunday is hardly less instructive than that of the Week. This beautiful institution was originally a real day of rest, a festival, a day of joy and thanksgiving and of spiritual exultation. Twice in the course of centuries it has been perverted by Scribes and Pharisees. There is every reason to believe the Sabbath to have been a Mosaic institution; but none to prove that the Sabbath of the later rabbis was instituted by Moses. In the view of Kuenen and other authorities, the Fourth Commandment, as we have it, is not in its original form. It has been tampered with and amplified. The Mosaic law instituted a weekly day of rest, a religious festival; and so it probably continued for centuries down to the return from exile, when Judaism received a sacerdotal character, and the Jews became a sect instead of a nation.

The Sabbatical restrictions were made constantly more stringent and mechanical down to the time when Jesus and Paul repudiated the rabbinical Sabbath. In the second century of our era, "Sabbatisers" were those who adhered to the old superstition, and the "Lord's Day," the following day, was made the Christian festival. This certainly did not take the place of the Sabbath. It was a new festival rivalling and superseding, but not reviving, the Mosaic institution. Both days were observed by some scrupulous Christians for several ages. Under the first Christian Emperor in the fourth century, we have the legal establishment of Sunday as a religious festival. In the Code we have a constitution of Constantine (321 A.D.) ordering the observance of Sunday—*venerabili die Solis*,—not by mechanical abstentions, but by rest from labour. He says, that in all courts of law and public offices it shall be kept as a holiday; and in the 12th title of Book iii. of Justinian's Code we have a series

of imperial ordinances, ending in closing the theatres on the "Lord's Day." In the Western Church, during the Mediæval period, Sunday remained a day of rest, a religious festival: not a fast, and anything but a Jewish Sabbath.

This was broken by Calvinism, which for some three centuries has oppressed large parts of Protestant Christendom. Calvin in his *Institutes*, dealing with the Fourth Commandment (Inst. ii. 8, 28), says: "The end of this commandment is that we, being dead to our own affections and works, should be busied in meditation of the kingdom of God." But he does not seem to lay down any special rules of Sabbatical observance. He says indeed that the Fourth Commandment "hath a peculiar and several consideration from the rest." As a profound student of the Bible, Calvin, no doubt, detected that apocryphal element in our decalogue which modern orientalists have found in this commandment. But the "Sabbath" of the Puritans and Covenanters is the result of later glosses upon Calvin, just as the Sabbath of the post-exilic rabbis was a sectarian gloss upon the Ten Words of Moses. Thus the Pharisaical "Sabbath," that is still servilely worshipped by some Bible Christians in England, in Scotland, in parts of Northern Europe, in America of the North-East, is not even of Mosaic origin. It is not truly Jewish; it is a corruption of Judaism, just as image-worship has been a corruption of Christianity. It is a superstitious invention of the decadence of Judaism, of the decadence of Christianity.

It is not Christian; it is certainly not Catholic; it has not been practised by the bulk of Christians nor in the great ages of Christendom. It has been accepted only by certain groups of Christian dogmatists for a small part of the Christian era in certain



portions of the Christian world. This perversion of Judaism, this revolt from Christianity, this corruption of Protestantism, is really a reversion to the mechanical superstition of Polynesian savages, which they call *Taboo*. *Taboo* is that which is marked off, and so consecrated or forbidden. Amongst all primitive races this *taboo*, or superstitious separation or dedication, exists; and at last it crystallises always into inane and degrading formalities. It has often been remarked that the rabbinical Sabbath was evolved out of a barbarous form of *taboo*, of which it is a degraded survival. What is often called the "Christian Sabbath" would be more properly named the "Protestant *Taboo*." The idea that an Omnipotent Creator and a Saviour of Mankind can take delight in seeing men, women, and children pass twenty-four hours in dismal inertia (for flesh and blood cannot endure more than a few hours of "spiritual exercises"),—that they could be offended by human beings enjoying any beautiful thing,—is an amazing instance of the survival of barbarous customs amongst civilised people.

But we, who repudiate the Taboo conception of a Sabbath Day, are those who most earnestly desire to restore Sunday as a religious festival and to keep it as a day of rest. We are as much opposed, as the most devout Jewish or conscientious Sabbatarian can be, to make Sunday only another Monday, or day of ordinary work. We are equally opposed to make it another Saturday, a mere holiday, like the statutory holidays of the year. For us, Sunday should be, what since its institution some three thousand years ago, it has usually been, a day of rest, of religious festival, a day for the true culture of the mind and the spirit, for congregational communion in all that is good, pure, and inspiring—a day for educating all that is best in our personal, our domestic, our social life.

XIV

THE VETO ON DRINK

I PROPOSE to say a few words upon a single definite point in a very broad and complicated question, and to express my own personal view without attempting to dogmatise for others. I desire to assert a principle and not to discuss any special agitation or Bill, much less to argue the drink trade on party grounds; and I shall purposely put aside subordinate practical questions arising out of temporary and local conditions. The social obligations that group round the Religion of Humanity are not local, nor are they national; and they are independent of climate, race, and the habits of each local society. I wish to deal with one supreme moral and social principle which should govern all that we do and say in practical legislation.

That principle is, that the enforcement of a moral practice by legal coercion upon the vote of any majority whatever, is of the essence of tyranny and has in it all the evil of religious persecution. It is an attempt to effect by force and law a moral and social reform which can only be healthily promoted by moral and spiritual agencies. It involves that abandonment of moral effort for material penalties which is one of the most fatal tendencies of our age, a tendency which brutalises government whilst it dis-



credits religion. The great triumph of Christianity, as Comte has shown more powerfully than any preacher of the Gospel, was to separate the sphere of moral and spiritual influence from the iron grip of the judge and the policeman. Positivism is, in its essence, a revival of the eternal problem, how to found a spiritual power apart from any material power. And on that ground it has steadfastly opposed all State religions, all compulsory orthodoxy, all enforced education, all morality by Act of Parliament, and virtue appraised by the civil magistrate. It is for teachers, preachers, and philanthropists to make men sober, chaste, temperate, unselfish, and industrious. It is for the magistrate and police to punish disorder, crime, all forms of recognised offences and personal injuries, material, civil, or moral. On this ground, which is the foundation of civil and religious government, it is tyranny to penalise habits which masses of good and wise men regard as innocent and even salutary. For my part, I look on any ulterior aim of abolishing alcohol by statute as an insidious form of spiritual tyranny.

Though the venom of fanaticism is not to be diverted by any proviso or disclaimer, I wish to make it clear that I am not suggesting a word against stringent regulations of the public sale of alcohol, and of all public places where it is served; nor against any penalties on public intoxication, or on acts committed under the influence of drink, or on incitement and connivance to drunkenness. It is a practical question for which much may be urged, whether great reforms in law and administration are not still needed. It may be desirable to strengthen the law making intoxication in public a crime. Intoxication in public stands on the same footing as a public act of indecency, or the public use of a dangerous beast.

To encourage or to allow drunkenness in any public resort may fairly be made a serious crime in those responsible for its good conduct. And if the tavern-keeper is the mere agent of the drink merchant, it may be a further duty to send the drink merchant himself to prison, when duly affected with legal notice of his agent's offence. It may be high time to deprive the magistracy of powers which they have sometimes abused in the interest of brewers, as they have in the interest of game-preservers and many powerful persons and corporations.

But all these matters of public police stand on a different footing from the suppression of the use of alcohol, of the traffic in alcohol, of the public retailing of alcohol—apart from any overt act of intoxication, any public disorder or personal injury due to it as a direct and visible consequence. And, now that a heated and ignorant fanaticism is claiming this power as its lawful due in the name of social morality and well-being, it becomes a civic duty to take up an uncompromising position against it. This is the more incumbent on free and independent citizens because public men and what are so comically styled "responsible" statesmen, in the race of democratic competition, are selling themselves to any organised body of voters. No goodness in motive, no zeal in philanthropy or piety, no picture of the horrors of alcoholism, no statistics of national loss and misery, no accumulation of pseudo-scientific authority, should blind us to the monstrous wrongfulness of any attempt to suppress alcohol by law. It is in any form an anti-social tyranny, degrading alike to the cause of morality and religion.

It matters not that many worthy men and women trace most of our vices or sufferings to the abuse of alcohol; it matters not that some hysterical men



and women find evil in the careful use of alcohol; it matters not that in any particular spot they may be a majority. So long as an immense body of citizens of all orders and sorts choose to use alcohol, think it right to do so, and cannot be shown to offend their neighbours whilst doing so with moderation, it would be tyrannical to punish or forbid the consumption of any food which an orderly adult thinks it desirable and right to take. To deny him or her this liberty is to destroy moral responsibility, and to subject private morality to Spartan or Hindoo swaddling clothes. Every law that violates conscience, by imposing either conduct or opinion rejected by just and wise men, is an act of tyranny on those whose liberty is violated, and an act of demoralisation to those whose power is abused. And the social, civic, and religious mischiefs flowing from such tyranny far outweigh any immediate or special gain in moral result.

After a struggle of fifteen centuries, Western Europe has almost adopted this rule in the case of enforcing religion by penalties. The existence of our own movement is striking proof how complete is the victory in England of religious tolerance. Now that the last embers of theological persecution are burnt out, a fanaticism as sincere and quite as blind as that of any Inquisition is seeking to set up moral persecution, a Holy Office to hand over moral unorthodoxy to the secular arm. There are no assignable limits to the extravagances of this. If conscientious and moderate use of personal freedom is to be made penal in all, because abuse of that freedom by some leads to possible and indirect mischief, we must go back to Moses and Aaron, Lycurgus, and the Quakers of New England.

A zealous body of reformers trace our national sufferings to the rapid increase of population. They

would like to separate *a thoro* the couple whose family exceeded the regulation number, and enforce absolute separation on a second offence. The population problem is quite as serious as the drink problem. It would be difficult to prove that alcohol was the source of more crime and misery in the world than sex. Sexual irregularity, as such, might be brought, as in New England of old, within the arm of the law. And if the freedom of all is to be stopped at its source, to prevent the ulterior and possible licence of some, it might be made an offence for a man and a woman to dance, walk, or talk together.

A zealous band of vegetarians preach that animal food is practically poison; and there may be an agitation to close the butcher's shop as well as the tavern. The national Meat Bill far exceeds the national Drink Bill; and many competent authorities hold that more disease is due to excess in food than to excess in drink. Many parents shamefully abuse their parental authority. Therefore, it is argued, allow no father to punish a child. In very truth, if we once empower the magistrate to punish personal conduct as well as civil wrong, there is no limit to the extravagance of tyrannical fanaticism.

It is certainly from no lukewarmness as to moral conduct that the teaching of Comte rejects the encroachment of law on morality. It is in the name of morality and religion that it does so. Comte himself carried the rigidity of his personal abstinence, there is reason to fear, to the point of injuring his health. He abjured not only all alcohol and tobacco, but even such stimulants as coffee and tea, reduced his sleep and exercise to the lowest measure, and his daily food to the simplest minimum that could sustain life. He looked forward to a time when most women and preachers would, as a rule, renounce alcohol for them-



selves. But he has said much more about moderation in food, both in quality and costliness, than he has said about abstinence from stimulants. And he has said more about sexual control, even within the strictest monogamy, than about temperance in food and drink. He has taught that man's appetites, passions, and selfish instincts are infinitely complex and subtle, and that it is the entire organic nature and egoism in the gross which has to be disciplined, and not that one single appetite is to be restrained by a penal asceticism, whilst the other appetites are suffered to run riot.

We see daily how violent zealots for total abstinence are gross feeders ; and many a rich reformer in alcohol lives like Lucullus or Vitellius, or resorts to chemical stimulants. Many of them have abnormally large families, which they sometimes cruelly neglect. Excess in dress, in luxury, gambling, frivolity and idleness in all their forms are national scourges and degrading habits. But it does not follow that we can enforce Vegetarianism or Malthusianism by imprisonment, or have sumptuary and ascetic regulations for every detail of life. It was tried in a nobly religious spirit and with singular moral earnestness by the Pilgrim Fathers, and was a disastrous failure. It proved to be social tyranny which tore up morality by the roots. The basis of morality is moral freedom, moral responsibility, and conscientious conviction. The Bishop was right, that it is better to be free than sober. Moderation in enjoyment of life is a far higher state than any penal abstinence. It is better to struggle, even feebly, against habits of self-indulgence, than to become a total abstainer by the rules of the prison. The very condition of true temperance is to reject the degrading temptation to appeal to force rather than reason, and to substitute the policeman for moral and spiritual teaching.

XV

CHURCH DISESTABLISHMENT

THE measure introduced by Mr. Asquith in 1894 for the resettlement of the foundations, now monopolised by the Church of England in Wales, was an act of justice and policy, conceived on true lines, and worked out with statesmanlike foresight. From the point of view of political principle, it was one of the most important reforms ever submitted to the legislature; for, though its scale of operation was small and the changes it proposed were moderate, it embodied political doctrines which go far and involve much. It is not proposed here to discuss its practical machinery, all the more that the House of Lords, with the official spokesmen of the favoured creed, at once resolved to throw out the Bill. The result of this just and trenchant effort to get rid of an ancient abuse will not be so easily disposed of. But it concerns a principle of society and of religion of the first importance.

Positivists may justly claim to be the only religious society which, both by principle and practice, insists on the absolute integrity and independence of the spiritual communion. Other Churches claim or cry out for secular support, State recognition, public money, and official intervention, and the Established Church and the Catholic Church are the most clamorous of



all. The Church of England, true to its origin as the creature of the monarchy and the tool of the legislature, clings to its legal monopoly, without regard for real spiritual interests; and it would to-day risk revolution and public calamity so long as it could preserve its own privileges. The Church of England has bred many wise and saintly spirits, and it has had some useful and even beautiful functions through its lowest epoch of degradation; but, looked at historically and politically, it exhibits one of the saddest spectacles which has ever dishonoured Western Christendom. From the end of the eighteenth century and to-day, it has resumed the work of a true spiritual body. But from the Revolution of 1648 until the European Revolution of 1789, it was a mere liveried toady of the rich, the black police of the governing order; and the long era of the Trullibers and the pluralists has left an indelible stain on the Establishment in its official aspect.

English priests and congregations in our day, it is quite true, are exhibiting individually, and for many spiritual ends, examples as truly religious as those of any existing body. But a century and a half of the most sordid sycophantism and the coarsest self-indulgence cannot be wiped out without surrender of a class monopoly, State servility, and wealth more scandalous than that of any extant Christian communion. Officially, the Church of England is still the creature of a secular legislature, the paid partisan of the political interests of the rich. Nothing but being relieved of its official privileges and its preposterous wealth can ever enable it to rise to the level of a pure and honest spiritual communion.

The Catholic Church in Ireland is, owing to exceptional conditions, in a true and normal situation. But, even in England, the Catholic Church is the

political and social ally of the rich; and its traditional policy of seeking everywhere a State monopoly is so inveterate that, even here, it supports the principle of an established Church. The Nonconformists are naturally jealous of a State Church, and bitterly resent the privileges and endowments reserved for a single sect which neither by its numbers nor its works has any claim to predominate. But any of the Nonconformists would gladly accept State recognition, public money, Acts of Parliament, seats in the legislature, official honours and national endowments—if they saw any chance of getting them.

The religious principles of Positivism forbid it to touch any of these things, even if it were offered them; and it may thus claim to have a far higher standard of spiritual independence than Churchmen, Catholics, or Nonconformists. All of these no doubt would prefer to have public endowments, national privileges, and legislative protection without incurring any obligation of lay control, parliamentary interference, or State direction. If they could, they would all—from Cardinals to Shakers—take money, dignities, or charters whilst remaining perfectly free to manage their own affairs alone. But failing this impossible condition, they would take anything they could get at the price of surrendering more or less of their liberty. Sensible people must see that secular endowment means lay control; State recognition means State authority, and charters and statutes mean the orders of politicians. Politicians do not give these things or incur these cares without a *quid pro quo*. The only *quid pro quo* that Churches can give politicians is the using their pulpits or their confessionals to influence votes. The very essence, then, of State Churches and National Endowments is the corrupt bargain by the spiritual communion to do for gain the very thing



which spiritual communions exist to prevent. And yet all Episcopal Churches and almost all Non-conformist sects are ready to barter their religious independence for a mess of pottage.

The only honest and pure position for any religious association is to keep itself rigidly free from any secular control or duty. The normal relation of the Church and the State is that of the Christian community in the third century before it sold itself for endowments and establishment to Constantine and his successors. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"—should be its unfailing motto. Cæsar's money and honours mean Cæsar's orders. To suppose that the Church is to be loaded with dignities, privileges, and wealth, and yet remain its own spiritual master, is a hallucination that can only delude some raw curate, fresh from his Great-Go and Boat-club. For a century or two to come at least, the idea of England being united in one religious community is a childish dream. And whilst there are several Christian communities in a democratic country, it is an incessant source of strife to give privileges to any one. If all are endowed alike, at so much per head, politicians must exercise the ultimate control over the religious bodies which take their pay. A really religious body should not be conterminous with the State or in any way identified with or controlled by the State. The very term Church of England is a badge of degradation. A national Church is the type of an unspiritual, narrow, local, and Erastian Church. If a Church has no wider spiritual interests than the civil government, unless it stands outside and above civil government, it does not deserve the name of Church at all.

We need not waste time over the preposterous pretence that we are bound to retain the disposition of property made by those who are long since dead. If

they wished to secure their possessions absolutely to themselves they should have carried these possessions with them to their own place. But as they have left their lands and their buildings, their income and goods, to be tilled by the living, to be guarded, repaired, collected, and administered by the present generation, the present generation have an unlimited authority to dispose of them in any way they think fit. It would be as silly to suppose that men are all bound to be circumcised and abstain from pork, because Moses so directed them three thousand years ago ; or because our cathedrals were built by Catholics, that we are bound to continue to devote them to the mass. At the Reformation the Church of England by Act of Parliament obtained the root and branch disestablishment and disendowment of the entire Catholic foundations, turned out all the orders and gave their property to lay speculators, and diverted from its destination every stone and every acre on which it could lay its hand. After this act of spoliation—one of the most violent and pitiless recorded in modern history—it is ridiculous for the same Church, the mere creature and servant of the State, to talk about sacrilege and robbery when modern statesmen propose to subject it to a very moderate and extremely considerate application of the legal doctrine of *cy-prés*.

The scheme proposed by the Liberal Government of 1894 for the modification of the Church of England in a part of this island was a moderate and yet an honest proposal. We leave it to antiquated pedants to talk about the inalienable rights of the Church. There never was a religious community which had less of a sacred and immemorial character. It is a mere government bureau which voluntarily accepts to have its creed, its ritual, its discipline, its entire priesthood and prelacy, determined for it by laymen who



are not at all necessarily Churchmen or even Christians. John Morley may yet have to appoint an Archbishop of Canterbury, and the late Lord Aylesbury was the "patron" of many "livings." We might as well talk of the "sacred rights" of the Income Tax or the County Police as those of the Church of England. The fact that it would be convenient to commence the reform in certain western counties and parishes, is a practical detail on which nothing turns. There is no Church of Wales, no such corporation known to the law as Church of England. The Church is a mere agglomerate of corporate bodies every one of which is under lay control, with a supreme head in a lay sovereign, and ordered from session to session by a Parliament in which Catholics and Dissenters alternately hold the balance. If convenient, disestablishment might begin in every town with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Ultimately, of course, it must extend to the whole of the three kingdoms.

Let it not be supposed that Positivists, much less the present writer, feel any animosity to the Church of England as a spiritual body, apart from its monopoly of privilege and wealth. On the contrary, we feel that it is capable of higher religious functions than any other Protestant body; and the present writer at any rate has a deep esteem for many of its best workers and sympathy with its intellectual, spiritual, and artistic traditions. As men who hold that the most urgent need of the time is the formation of a spiritual authority, we are certainly aware of the religious capabilities which abound in the Church of England. The rise of a living social Church is, we know, the first condition of a purer life. And we recognise the living elements of a Church in the communion of Hooker and Ken, Wesley and Keble.

But they are choked and poisoned by the tares of official prelacy, legal monopoly, and scandalous endowments. Apart from its simoniacal constitution and its unholy alliance with the richer orders of laymen, the Church, as a purely spiritual and free society of Christian believers, might do good social work and raise the tone of civilisation. As a mere ecclesiastical Primrose League it must remain an enemy of social progress and a scandal to true religion, until it can renounce State support and national property as completely as does the Catholic Church in Ireland.



XVI

THE RECOGNITION OF ANGLICAN ORDERS

THE public press has been much occupied of late with the relations of the Catholic and the Anglican Churches and with the policy of recent Popes in that matter; many English Churchmen and English Catholics have been greatly stirred by the movement, into which a venerable statesman flung himself with his wonted ardour and eloquence. Those who have only a superficial knowledge of Positivists might possibly suppose that the whole question is one without the remotest interest for them; that the validity of Anglican orders, the historical continuity of the Churches, the views of Leo XIII., Pio X., Mr. Gladstone, could only awaken in them a mild sense of amused bewilderment, and a wonder that responsible rulers of great communities should occupy their time with such pedantic formalism.

This idea would imply a radical misconception. The question between the various Christian Churches is one in which we can take a serious interest, and which we by no means approach in a spirit of ignorance or contempt. We are not, and I suppose none of us ever have been, Atheists or Materialists in the proper sense of those terms: we

do not accept the name of Agnostics or Sceptics, Free-Thinkers or Unbelievers. We hold a Positive Faith, with a systematic creed and a coherent body of doctrine; by that only do we desire to be known and described. We believe in the paramount importance of an organised spiritual communion; we hold by the ancient things and familiar names of Religion, Church, Worship, and Priesthood. The development, fusion, or schism of Churches are therefore to us very dominant factors in any type of social organisation.

And, certainly, none the less that they are Christian Churches, and that the point at issue turns on the position of the Papal communion and claims. It is obvious that the rise and development of the Catholic Church is, in the Positivist synthesis, far the most important phenomenon in the whole evolution of religion, whilst in the Positivist scheme of universal history, the action and reaction of the Roman type of Christianity occupies a place of interest that no other movement in history surpasses. Every word that has been written by Comte, every publication of our body, goes to the same effect, as any one might observe if he glanced at the lives of the Catholic worthies in our "New Calendar of Great Men," where they occupy about one-fifth of the whole. Nor do we speak in complete ignorance of the Churches as seen from the inside. Comte himself was brought up as a Catholic by zealous Catholic parents. It so happens that in England most of us came out of orthodox Christian families, some of us from families in the priesthood. And most of us were sincere communicants in Anglican or Protestant communions until well into mature life. We have none of us ceased to be in close relation and in active sympathy with devout Christian men and women, and, indeed, with



some who hold responsible office in one or other of the Churches.

Now, to us who study the history of the Catholic Church as a crucial problem in social dynamics, what strikes us as so unaccountable is the expectation in the minds of men like Mr. Gladstone and Lord Halifax that something new was likely to arise in the way of conciliation between the Roman and Anglican communions out of the friendly courtesies of the ruling Pontiff. Leo XIII. was apparently one of the most sagacious and fatherly spirits who in these ages have occupied the Holy See. But that anything like a compromise—a case of give-and-take—*do ut des*—was about to issue from his sagacity or his benevolence, does strike us, as impartial students of Latin Christianity from the first Leo to the thirteenth, as a strange hallucination. To suppose that Rome was about to move one step towards Canterbury, to surrender that which has been its chief winning claim for fourteen centuries, to hand over the keys of St. Peter to heretics for an hour—was as idle as to ask for the Vatican to be transported *en bloc* to London. Without pretending to know what exactly was in the large mind of his amiable Holiness, as cool observers of ecclesiastical strategy, we know that there is one thing which neither Leo XIII., nor any Leo XXXIII., will ever accept, and that is, the sharing in joint occupancy the heavenly gifts of St. Peter with local schismatics.

To admit the validity of Anglican orders is to accept the concurrent possession by heretics of the exclusive mystery solely entrusted to Peter. Upon this mystical consecration the whole prerogative claim of the See of Rome is based. To abandon it is to admit that the Rock of Peter has no greater virtue than any sand-heap whereon any revolting body of

Christians may choose to build a sacerdotal *sedile*. It is really the central idea whereon rests the claim of the See of Rome to be Catholic and not local. With all its powers of adaptability, which do give some meaning to its claims of Catholicity, the strength of Rome lies in its immutable fixity in that which it regards as fundamental. In the Maelström of ever revolving change or movement, wherein modern society makes its primary boast, the See of Rome does seem to many minds the one stable point, the only solid rock in the surge of waters. And it cannot be doubted that the mystical commission entrusted in the beginning of the Gospel to "the Chief of the Apostles" is — if anything else be so — a real "fundamental."

Of course, we quite agree with all enlightened and learned Protestants that the play of words about Peter and the Rock is an antique quibble, without a shred of historical authority. Apostolical Succession, Transmission of Grace, and mystical foundation of the Holy See are merely phrases in which the superstition of ages has wrapped up a vast organisation aiming at the moral cultivation of men—one which for a certain time succeeded, and still, in a degree, succeeds in its task. We are quite ready to allow the Catholic Church full credit for any useful social purposes it fulfils, without making too much of the obsolete figments on which it professes to rest its authority, just as we can accept the British Monarchy as a part of the Constitution, though we reject the antique fiction that the Crown has a divine right. But when we are confronted with the rival claims of the Catholic and Anglican orders, it does seem incomprehensible that serious and devout Anglicans can be found to stickle for such double-distilled transcendentalism. The divine commission of Peter and his successors is at any



rate lost in the mist of antiquity and has received the allegiance of eighteen centuries. The divine commission of Parker and his successors is quite recent and prosaic—well within the bounds of historic verification. To us it sounds like the burlesque imitation of a miracle-play.

This brings us back for the hundredth time to wonder at the trifling gain to intellectual consistency for which Anglicanism sacrifices so much that is the strength of Rome. The sacramental theory it teaches is not a whit more scientific than the Sacrifice of the Mass, and loses much in spiritual efficacy. The Thirty-nine Articles do not seem to us more rational, nor even more intelligible, than the Papal Syllabus. Whether there be seven sacraments, or only two, is in itself a dispute about words. If a sacrament is a ceremonial commemorative of true Christian communion, then two sacraments are too few; and if a sacrament is a mystical infusion of supernatural grace, then they are too many. To take a vast body of transcendental hypotheses, resting on a vague mass of unverifiable traditions and inscrutable writings, having a huge accretion of custom and ceremonial that has grown up during eighteen centuries, and commands sympathy from hundreds of millions in all parts of the world—to pare off a hypothesis here and there, to pick and choose in the inscrutable writings, to turn poetry into prose, and drama into narrative, to convert the gorgeous old litanies and ceremonies into dull and arid forms that have no more scientific reality than the old, this does seem a needless parade of hypocritical reformation.

To those who study the conditions and relations of Religion as seen in the whole course of human civilisation over the Planet, all forms of Theology are without verification or demonstration, *i.e.* are mere hypotheses,

figments, or creations of the human mind. The varieties in these hypotheses and figments are of quite minor importance in logic, and are for the most part utterly trivial. That certain theological hypotheses are of far greater moral and social efficacy than are others is indeed most true; and this determines the social usefulness of any type of religion. We quite agree that some theologies have a beautiful power over the human soul, and have grandly conduced to human civilisation; whilst others have been cruel, base, or deadening. The hypotheses of the Incarnation and the Immaculate Conception have certainly had powerful moral reactions on men and on nations; whilst the hypotheses of Moloch and Jaggernauth have had an evil reaction on the whole. But logically speaking, unverified and unverifiable hypotheses stand on much the same ground of intellectual hollowness. The ground may give way under them at any moment, so soon as scientific habits of thought begin to prevail. To pare away half-a-dozen corollary hypotheses from a vast hypothetical superstructure and leave the rest standing, whilst supplying no new support to the ground on which the whole is based, does nothing to make the edifice secure. The whole thing may come down with a crash by its own weight.

What to us seems so strange in the Anglican schism is that, without gaining any real advance in intellectual consistency, and leaving the creed quite as hypothetical as a whole, the English Church practically surrenders what gives the Roman Church its show of stability, and its moral power of discipline. A Church which has its foundations, not in the mystical words of Christ amongst his apostles, but in the passions and whims of Tudor sovereigns, which makes its ritual a cold and half-hearted imitation of old-world



ceremonials, which abandons the very pretence of discipline and converts its hierarchy into a mere aristocratic Trade-Guild, has ceased to be what from a broad view of human history, we ought to call a *Church*, and, as an institution, it is a mere historic survival, like the Corporation of London, or the Inns of Court. Certainly, there are in its ranks many men of great learning, piety, and goodness, and it represents continually the gathering together of some beautiful spirits. But much more than this is required to make a Church in the historic and social sense, as a dominant and organised Spiritual Power, at least co-equal with the Temporal Power. This Anglicanism never was, or pretended to be. For such a historic survival to busy itself about the Apostolical Succession of its Orders, is really a claim quite as purely antiquarian and as practically preposterous, as if the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor were to insist on being summoned to the Cabinet Councils.

It is wonderful that a statesman of the vast experience of Mr. Gladstone should be willing to run all the risks which any *rapprochement* between Rome and Canterbury would involve. Anglicanism, under the suspicion of Romanising, would lose much more than it would gain by any advance in its Ecclesiasticism. Those who care about the technical title-deeds of Churches, who deeply value the personal and social power of a Church, and who set Christianity far above logic, reason, proof, and science,—all such will ultimately join Rome, which is the historic, natural, organic form of a Christian Church. Those who think more of the real efficiency of a religious community than of its legal technicalities, or those who think any Church a mischievous and obsolete interference with the human conscience, as well as those who refuse to let any kind of religion, in the name of

Moses, Christ, Peter, or Mahomet, pretend to be more true than science, more sacred than Humanity, more certain than demonstration,—such will not join Rome. And, *a fortiori*, they will not join Canterbury—whether the Pope "recognises its Orders," or, remarking with a sigh "*Ego sum Petrus*," simply says *Non possumus*.



XVII

THE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

(1899)

SINCE the Church of England claims to be a national Church, established by law and regulated by Act of Parliament, endowed with political privileges and vast national possessions, its condition and future concern Agnostics as well as all other citizens; and they have every right to take part in the political agitation which it has chosen to create. Again, as having very deep interest in the restoration of religion and spiritual union, with no prejudice against any sincere religious movement, Positivists are especially able to take a thorough and impartial view of this very interesting crisis in the Christian world. They have much sympathy with both those permanent religious sentiments which are now face to face, struggling for mastery—the desire to make congregational worship both beautiful and imposing; the resolve to maintain personal devotion in moral purity, truth, and manliness.

If this religious crisis were now passing in the Catholic Church, in the Jewish synagogues, in any of the Protestant communions, it would not concern us to intervene, nor should we feel any interest in so doing. But the position of the Church of England is

quite different. Its boast and glory is to represent the nation and to be bound up with a complex set of political functions, institutions, and privileges. A lay Prime Minister, who may be a Jew or an Atheist, appoints the prelates; he could carry measures completely refashioning the system of worship, discipline, or doctrine. Any such measures would be enacted by the votes of Catholics, Nonconformists, Jews, and Agnostics, who might be a large majority in Parliament. Any lay parishioner of exemplary life and conduct, who has been baptized, and has duly performed all legal obligations in his parish, can enforce his rights to the ministrations of the national church, whatever his personal opinions; and, though he publicly deny every one of the Thirty-nine Articles, his parish priest cannot examine or punish him, nor can he deny him the offices or exclude him from his place in church. All this is the pride of the Church as a body, the sole justification for its political prerogatives, and the ground of its claim to be comprehensive, tolerant, and truly Catholic.

Individual Churchmen deeply resent this slavery; and some priests are foolish enough to think it possible to retain establishment, endowments, and prerogatives, and yet have that absolute freedom from all State or lay control which the Catholic priesthood naturally enjoys. That of course is absurd. They cannot have it both ways:—Establishment with all its wealth and seats of the mighty, its prestige and its political powers; and yet an Establishment sublimely defiant of the State or of any lay control. Every Christian communion in these islands—except one—is free. The Church of England has sold its freedom for wealth and power. It can recover its freedom and become a spiritual body again. But it cannot go forth to begin a higher life until it has left behind the magnificent



temples, estates, and monuments which the Tudors tore away from the Catholic Church, and until it has disgorged all the lordly and splendid prerogatives it has appropriated in its days of Erastian subserviency, as the parasite of the ruling class and the agent of class oppression.

Nor can it be said that English Positivists are Pagans and Gentiles, without sympathy or understanding in the problems of Anglican Churchmen. The Church of Humanity in England is indeed one of the off-shoots and free communions which the expansive and elastic spirit of Anglicanism has nurtured and bred. The Positivist movement in England was founded by an Anglican priest, and has been developed by his pupils and friends from Anglican colleges, schools, and Church institutions. Some of the most active writers and lecturers in the Service of Man were bred up in rectories and high-church homes and were trained for the Christian ministry. Many of us have been devout Churchmen until manhood, honest communicants, and sincere believers; and many of us still share in Christian worship from time to time without repugnance or contempt, and are closely connected with earnest Churchmen, both clerical and lay. The sympathy with Catholic rituals and sacerdotalism which ignorant Agnostics impute to Positivists is a remnant of our early religious training, so far as any such sympathy exists at all. As men who from childhood have been deeply imbued with traditions and sentiments of the Church, yet who in mature life gradually evolved a religious hope which even the Church Catholic is not broad enough to satisfy, Positivists are peculiarly apt to view the Anglican problem with sympathetic and impartial eyes.

What is commonly called Ritualism is a very small matter; and it ought not to cause any serious problem

in the Church. If that were all, the demand of the Bishops and sensible Churchmen to give them time to restore discipline and to leave the question to paternal counsel and episcopal tact, would be eminently wise and practical. It would serve to restore order as it has so often served before. The Church of England is a big thing in any case, and quiet men of the world naturally decline to pull it to pieces for a squabble about trivial matters of form—such as incense, candles, asperging, vestments, and genuflexions. Sour Puritans may be scandalised, but that is because their ideas of religion are narrow and hide-bound. Those who look for a Human Religion are only too glad to see Christians seeking a more beautiful and historic form of cult, and reviving some of the venerable rites of artistic Polytheism and of Eastern mysticism. There is nothing Christian about incense, holy water, processions of priests, prostrations, turning to the Eastern Sun, anointing, purification, and sacramental oblations and libations. All these things were borrowed by Catholics from Polytheistic and Theocratic rituals. And Positivists can only rejoice to see these immemorial habits of human religion borrowed again from Catholics by Anglican priests and Churchmen.

But the revival of antique and graceful rites, which have never been quite extinct in the English Church, is not all. There is a far broader problem—one which sixty years ago shook the Church to its foundations, but which is to-day a far deeper and more organised movement. That is the intense craving of an influential body of Anglicans, lay as well as clerical, for reunion with the Catholic Church. That deep longing to "go home," as so many devout men and women call it, has never been quite suppressed in the English Church; and in an age of intellectual and sentimental reaction like the present it is stronger and wider than



it has ever been, perhaps since the time of Laud. What was a sporadic sentiment in the days of Newman and Manning is now an organised and reasoned movement. It is perhaps difficult to estimate its strength in the way of numbers. It must count its priests by four figures and its laymen by five figures, to say the least. But figures go for little in such things. Spiritual things are ruled by influence, and by commanding natures. And if there were but a score of such in the movement, it ought to bring sleepless nights to the Bishops and to the Ministers who make and control the Bishops.

Of course, Positivists will not be disturbed if a wholesale "conversion" to Rome take place in the Anglican Church. We look on it not only as natural, but as inevitable. We have long been accustomed to treat the Church Catholic as the only essential form of Christianity, and Protestantism as an illogical and temporary make-shift. But collective reunion with Rome, as recent events have proved, is not at all a simple matter. Men and women, priests and laymen, may "go over" separately in any numbers. But when it comes to any kind of amalgamation of corporate bodies, the trouble begins. Rome will not yield an inch—of course not. It would not be Rome if it did. As to orders, discipline, dogma, ritual—it is absolute submission to Peter, or nothing. This is very grievous even to the most Catholic-minded Anglican priest. Laymen, of romantic loyalty to our gracious Sovereign, feel the old Protestant qualm about the Pope of Rome in these realms. Lord Halifax and his lay friends and many young curates may desire reunion. But there is one cruel difficulty still. The great majority of Anglican priests have wives, or hope to have wives. In joining the Catholic Church they give up their orders and all hope of a

priestly career. They sink into the lay crowd. For them it is written over the portal of Rome—*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi, ch' entrate.* They long to be Catholic; but can they renounce the priesthood to which their whole lives are dedicated?

There is also another dilemma. We hear a great deal about "lawlessness in the Church," and we shall hear much more. Now this "lawlessness" is not a mere Romanising tendency. It is an ingrained temper of anarchy, self-will, and self-conceit which the chaotic state of the Establishment in the last fifty years has bred in the priesthood. For sheer, obstinate, arrogant individualism it would be difficult to match a high ritualist, at least within any ministerial function. For all their passionate ritualism, these men are personally as stiff-necked and as opinionated as a Free Kirk elder. There are dozens of distinct "Unions" and "Associations," scattering the seeds of disunion: all differing from each other on matters great and small; and each bent on going its own way to the end. The temper, traditions, and instincts of the true Catholic priesthood differ from those of the "revolting parsons," as completely as the discipline of a Prussian guardsman differs from that of a British volunteer. Lawlessness, loose discipline, and individualism are bred in the law and traditions of Anglicanism. The Romanisers all want to go to Rome by different routes, and personally to conduct their group of travellers when they get there. If the whole body of the Anglican clergy were suddenly to be reconciled to the Pope, it may be doubted if even the enormous forces at the disposal of Peter could drill them into the true temper of Catholic submission. Heresies, revolts, and scandals would make uneasy the head that wears the Triple Crown.

After all, the real point is a much more definite

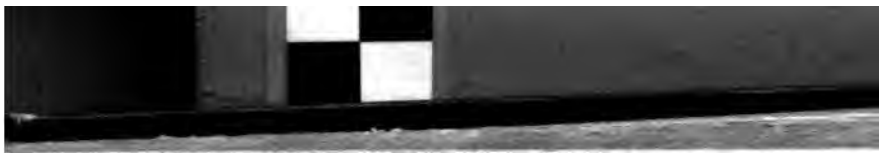


and serious one. It is this—the sacerdotal claim: first, to perform the miracle of the "Mass," *i.e.* to turn bread and wine into God; and secondly, to absolve the sinner from God's wrath by Confession and Absolution as part of compulsory discipline and ordinary communion. It is true that these rites are understood by Churchmen and even amongst Ritualists, with immensely varying shades of meaning: from that which is a gross objective miracle to that which is a mere subjective sentiment—from the horrible bullying of weak girls down to the occasional outpouring of a burdened soul. It is quite true also that the official language of the Establishment, with that spirit of shuffling in which it was begotten and bred, does admit of being strained from one extreme to the other.

But in the medley of *double-entente* which composes the Anglican code, there is one thing certain which is this. The English Church broke off from the Church Catholic because it denied that a priest could or should objectively turn a bit of bread into Christ, or force penitents to have their sins personally wiped out in habitual secret confession. Now, a very determined and influential body of Anglican priests are resolved to introduce both these practices in their most material and imperious form. It signifies little that at present they are not numerous. Those whom they influence, and those who approve the rites and practices whereby the central aims of sacerdotalism are disguised, are very numerous. The extreme Romanisers are secret, uncandid, and unscrupulous. And all the devices of incense, asperges, antiphones, copes, reservation for the sick, and weak consciences, are merely the trappings and excuses of the great sacerdotal miracle, or of the coveted sacerdotal power to give the sinner a free conscience and light heart.

There lies the gravity of the crisis. In the days of Newman some earnest Churchmen sought rest for their troubled intellects in Rome. Now an organised but secret body of Anglican priests are bent on taking over to Rome whole sections of their Church, and at least large congregations *en bloc*. Short of this, they are bent on practising within the Church those sacerdotal acts of a supernatural commission which the Reformed Church was founded to stop. Will this succeed? At present these extreme men are a small minority; but they are resolute and know their own minds. Few as they are, they have around them a large body of Ritualists, clerical and lay, who are not at all prepared to go to the end, but who fervently cling to the trivial externals wherein the miracles are draped. These mere "Ritualists," who are possibly within the ambiguities of Church law, may number a third or a quarter of the congregations of the larger towns. They would bitterly resent being deprived of their incense, candles, holy water, vestments, and processions, and would rise against bishops, judges, or legislators who tried to put them down.

On the other hand, they are still a minority of the nation, exclusively drawn from the richer classes of the towns. To sanction within the Established Church the real objective miracles and confessional, with the priest's power of personal absolution as an habitual rite, would be to effect a greater revolution than anything that has been done since the time of Elizabeth. It may come; but at present the mass of the electorate would refuse by ten to one to admit it into the Establishment. But the ritualist movement is now so strong, with leaders so immeasurably superior both in character and brains to any of the old Evangelicals, the tidal wave to Catholicism runs now so broad and deep, that it looks like a hopeless task



for the Bishops to stem, with bland episcopal counsels, the tendency they have so long trifled with, minimised, and even encouraged. And yet if they do not, if there be more rebellion, more scandals, more open Romanism in the Church, the British public—which is still Protestant in the mass—will knock aloud at the doors of the House of Lords and of Commons; and will insist that these Popish practices and priestly usurpations shall no longer be carried out by the wealth and prerogatives of a Parliamentary Church.

XVIII

PRIMARY EDUCATION

(1897)

THE elementary teaching of the children of the people, which ought to be a simple problem for experts in finance and in administration, has been most woefully obscured by the clamour of sects and priests. The greater part of the hot controversy we have lately heard turns on the question—"How shall the children be got to profess, or at least to be counted as members of this or that theological sect?" Those who cry out most loudly about the "intolerable strain" on the voluntary schools are often those who care least for the education of the people, those who would gladly do anything they could to discredit and reduce the efficiency of the Board schools. The real aim is to get hold of public money to promote Church interests—not in order to teach the children.

Underneath the whole agitation is the unfair, untrue, misleading use of the term "voluntary schools." There are no *voluntary* schools. A "voluntary" school once meant a school supported by voluntary subscriptions—like a hospital, a club, or an institution, maintained by the subscriptions of those who think they serve a good purpose. Elementary schools



managed by churches and sects are almost as completely State or Public schools as are any Board schools. The "voluntary" element is now (in 1897) reduced to less than *one-sixth*—which is not a *bona fide* proportion at all. If a hospital got more than five-sixths of its income from public grants and less than one-sixth from its subscribers, could it continue to inscribe on its portal the proud motto—"supported by voluntary subscriptions"? It would be a fraud. What is the point at which clerical managers will cease to call denominational schools "voluntary," on the ground that there are still some subscribers left? If the sixth part fell to a twelfth, or a twenty-fourth part, would they still be "voluntary" schools? They would, no doubt, insist on being denominational, and also self-controlled—whilst maintained out of the general taxes.

Now, Newton Hall is a true "voluntary" school, and I can hardly think of any other. Newton Hall is a place of education, wholly maintained by the free offerings of those who desire the success of its work. The whole of the expenses of every kind are provided by voluntary gifts, and the whole of the teaching is offered without payment or fee by those who choose to accept it. We should decline to accept any kind of public money from the State, the Rates, or County Council, because we would accept no control, no test, no inspection, no examination, and no interference from any official authority. Public money implies public control; and Newton Hall consistently refuses both. But the denominational bodies which clamour for public money without submitting to public control, and which claim the right to teach dogmas very odious to many tax-payers, base their claim on a juggling use of the word "voluntary."

There are hospitals, libraries, musical societies,

honestly and truly voluntary, which are doing as much good work as the "voluntary" schools. It would be ridiculous if they clamoured to have more than five-sixths of their expenditure found them by the State, and still claimed the right to provide only such medical aid, such books, such entertainment, as they thought good, however repugnant these might be to the tax-payers who found the funds. Why should not the Homœpathic Hospital, the London Library, the People's Palace, complain of the "intolerable strain" on them caused by the competition of Bartholomew's, the British Museum, and the National Gallery, with the "bottomless purse" of the nation? Foundation Schools, Colleges, Universities, and Scientific Colleges, neither ask nor obtain grants from taxation, without submitting their management to public and official control.

When the nation undertook to found a complete and systematic plan of public instruction for the children of the people, there was only one logical and permanent basis. It was for the State to offer a general, free, quite elementary, but strictly secular instruction—giving every facility for the religious communions to work their own schools as they pleased, but without grants of money, and to have full opportunity and the use of the school houses for the religious teaching of their own members. It was a fatal mistake to make education *compulsory*. Almost alone of social reformers, the Positivists, along with some followers of Herbert Spencer, opposed compulsion. Most of the evils and controversies followed on the unwise and unconstitutional craze for compulsion. The attempt to force a theological education on masses of people who held a dozen different theologies, and many of them none at all, was a fatal dilemma, The results were all the feeble compromises and what



Mr. Riley and his friends call "School Board religion." Positivists can sympathise with this dislike of a "School Board religion," which, after all, is only an attempt to get something colourless which shall be no definite religion at all, and yet which all those who have deep feelings on religion very much reject.

If Positivists urge a system of secular education in all State schools, and in all schools receiving public money, it is not that they advocate secular education by itself, for Positivists are most fervent believers in a truly religious education. In principle we hold that education ought to be imbued with the religion of both teachers and taught, and indeed that it is a part of religion, and a kind of religion. Because they give to religious education a meaning so wide, real, and sincere, they object to lay officials of the State attempting to give religious education. As a matter of principle, we would see all education strictly religious, taught by men whose lives are dedicated to religion, with religious ideas, emblems, and forms at every turn to ennoble and inspire every step in the education.

The kind of religious education claimed by Anglicans or Catholics is, after all, but a stunted kind of compromise, and does not go far enough. In Newton Hall, however rudimentary are its resources, arithmetic, geometry, physics, or sociology may receive a tone that is at once scientific and religious, and there is not a lesson that cannot be clothed with a religious sanction and religious associations. That can be done by the Positivist scheme of thought, and by that alone. And thus Positivists can sympathise with all that Mr. Riley or Cardinal Vaughan insist as to the value of a religious elementary school. Only we say—not in the perfunctory way that a State-paid official would give it, and certainly not with our money, any more than Mr. Riley or Cardinal Vaughan

would like to have Positivism taught at their expense. Let Catholics, Anglicans, and Positivists give their own children a Catholic, Anglican, or Positivist education from first to last. But let neither of them ask Baptists, Jews, Theists, and Agnostics to pay for it. Still less, let none of these suppose that a really religious education in their sense can ever be taught by compelling children to learn a catechism and repeat a few prayers.

But this ideal of a denominational education cannot yet be reached, with millions of children to be taught, of different religious persuasions and of none at all. The solution is plain and simple. Give them the best attainable elementary schools, without fee, without compulsion, open to all freely—instruction strictly confined to rudiments—hours not very long—no pretence of religious instruction—no public money without public management. Then let the prayers, ceremonies, and all religious teaching, and any devotional practice desired, be supplied by various religious bodies on their own terms, in their own ways, in the public school-rooms if they like, in their own churches or school-rooms if they prefer it, but entirely at their own costs and charges. There would thus be :—(1) Public elementary schools, *for rudiments only*, in every sense free, and without any religious instruction. (2) Religious instruction, offered by religious bodies, *purely voluntary*, in or out of the public school-houses, at the sole management and cost of such bodies, but with every material facility found them by the public authority. There would be (3) voluntary denominational schools, managed, maintained, and founded by religious bodies at their sole cost and responsibility, receiving no public money, but any inspection, convenience, or examination which they chose to accept.



When the Act of 1870 was first applied I put forth a paper insisting on these views—that there should be no compulsion, no fees, no religious instruction, nothing but the rudiments, and strict attention to health and sanitary conditions. It is not the business of the State, I said, to undertake any religious instruction whatever. When the State (which has to do with the tax-gatherer and the policeman) attempts to inculcate opinions, it ends in the oppression of the people as well as the perversion of truth. But every facility may properly be given to the free development of voluntary efforts by such bodies as make it their business to appeal to conscience not to force. Education on such lines flourishes in countries where education is most successful. In France, in Germany, in the United States it is not found that Protestant and Catholic children will not submit to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic unless these are preceded by devotional acts and followed by dogmatic teaching in the ritual, catechisms, and manuals of their special church and sect. Catholics and Protestants give their own dogmatic teaching in their own way. And the sole reason on which Churchmen in England pretend that they cannot do the same is that the Establishment here has long had a preponderant influence over the Legislature.

The recent agitation to secure more public money for sectarian schools whilst retaining sectarian management is based upon a misleading use of a plain term, and is an attempt still further to encroach on fundamental principles of our public life. It is not so much the children as the Churches in whose interest the demands are made; not the schools which feel the "intolerable strain" so much as the sects which desire to have subscriptions replaced by taxes. And they seem to have no confidence that the children will

attend the special religious instruction unless it is part of the official *curriculum*. But this is only to call on the State to help them to fill not so much their schools as their churches, as if State-supported schools were to be converted into an entrance cloister to the Church. The language which has been used of late by the more violent advocates of denominational schools is so unreasonable and contrary to all principles of English policy, that it will assuredly advance the day when the nation will revise the whole system of hollow compromise now in operation, and will fall back on the only basis of a permanent settlement. In the meantime, we must hold fast to the only possible rules of a sound system :—

1. No public money without public control and official management responsible to the public body supplying the money.
2. Secular instruction in rudiments to be given in all State or rate-supported schools.
3. Religious instruction to be given by religious communities in their own way and at their own cost.



XIX

METROPOLITAN SCHOOL BOARD

(1870)

Having been invited by a strong Committee to come forward as a candidate for the first London School Board (1870), *I submitted to them the following address.*

To the Electors for the Westminster District

I AM unexpectedly called on to offer myself for election to the Metropolitan School Board; and I beg to submit the following statement of my views:—

The work before us is how to give to a million of untaught children the common rudiments of knowledge. It is nothing less than this—and it is nothing more. To encumber this simple end with religious, social, or political designs, would be to make that impossible which is already difficult.

The late Act may be made to give the people a plain elementary education, if this its purpose is worked out with energy and good sense. It will certainly fail if it be made a field for religious and political cabals.

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force. On these grounds I hold that State education should be not only unsectarian but secular.

But if the State has a very limited sphere in education, every facility may be given for the free development of voluntary efforts. There is no real difficulty in working a State education in the common rudiments, alongside of a higher education given by independent bodies in their own way and at their own cost.

It is important that any scheme of education should offer exactly equal advantages to girls as to boys; and, indeed, that the general instruction of both should be in principle the same.

Much must be done that schools may promote and not injure the health of the children. Short hours, ventilation, exercise, and rational amusements are absolutely indispensable; without which the school becomes for the young too often a prison or a sick-house. I believe it quite practicable to add to instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, some plain music—(not psalm singing), the rudiments of drawing, and some of those means of preserving health which are common to the children of the rich.

If these opinions are likely to meet with any support, I am prepared to offer myself for election to the Board; but as it would be to me nothing but an onerous task, I have on principle declined to canvass for support or to incur any expense.

XX

PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE

(1884)

Reply to an invitation from the Liberal Committee of Leicester to become a candidate, 1884.

I SHOULD count it no small honour to be selected, without any seeking of mine, by such a constituency as Leicester; but I feel no desire to enter the House of Commons.

I have hitherto declined to become a candidate, because I prefer to do what I can to form public opinion rather than to represent it in Parliament. In order that opinion may be formed in a really free way, there need to be at least some politicians who can speak out without regard to party exigencies or the immediate wishes of any constituency. Parliamentary government cannot be worked without party discipline, and party discipline implies the constant giving of votes on other grounds than personal conviction. Were I in Parliament, I should be very slow to join in a mutiny or to enter a "cave," for I recognise the paramount duty of compromise in a practical legislator. But this makes it all the more essential that some of those who seek to influence opinion should be free



from any concern for majorities, whether in or out of the House. One of the most sinister signs of the day is the readiness of statesmen to treat the bias of a majority as equivalent to right.

I am publicly pledged to certain opinions which I could not waive for tactical convenience; but which I could hardly expect any constituency to leave me free to assert. There are three great ends in politics which I have specially at heart. The first is to resist the policy of Aggression, to check the increase of the Empire, and to prepare for its inevitable reduction. The second is to deprive the State of any control over religion, and to make it strictly neutral in matters of opinion and in public education. The third is to remedy the paralysis of government caused by the interference of Parliament with the business of administration. I doubt if the House of Commons is at present the field where any one of these principles can be most effectively urged. The present war (in South Africa, 1884) I look on as one of the most wanton crimes and one of the most gratuitous burdens which have ever been imposed on our country. But it seems in vain to use this language in a House where both sides are equally eager for dominion.

Were I to enter on a statement of my political views, some of them might be thought too far advanced and others too Conservative. I would restrict the power of all hereditary authorities in government, with a view to their final extinction. I would recast our system of land laws, with a view to make the landowner and the cultivator one. I would support a genuine local government, both for town and country. And I am for Home Rule in Ireland. On some of the minor questions I am probably out of harmony with Radical majorities. I am opposed to compelling people to become temperate by law, or to force them

into State schools. I am for a simple manhood franchise, and a complete redistribution of seats; but I am opposed to any representation of minorities, or groups, and also to women's suffrage. I am also averse to any change in the marriage law, or to any relaxation of the laws for the prevention of disease and the punishment of crime. I would not further extend the powers of the State to check malpractices by private citizens; but I would strictly enforce the powers which the State already possesses, and make them a reality.

These, however, are questions on which I need not enlarge. In my opinion, the problems of the day require social more than legislative solutions; and as my interests lie mainly with the former, I do not seek the honour of a seat in Parliament.



XXI

REFORM OF THE LORDS

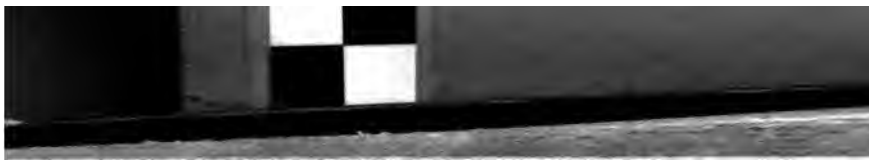
(1906)

THE part of the Upper House in our parliamentary system is at last seen to be the critical question of our time. Are the Lords to be the ultimate Court of Appeal, without whose consent no legislation can proceed?

By the first Reform Act of 1832, the middle classes in England obtained a preponderant influence in domestic affairs, though practically administered by a Liberal aristocracy which kept international policy in its own control. From the first Reform Act of 1832 down to the third of 1885, the House of Lords, as a body of the Legislature, was neither strong nor respected. Socially, of course, the Peers retained their prestige, perhaps even increased it by immense creations (about 150 in twenty years), and by profusely admitting wealth and public service. But the House of Lords was expected to give way, when seriously confronted with the House of Commons, and would not venture to act as a "blocker" to measures which passed the Lower House by large majorities. Until a generation ago, such a proceeding would have been thought to risk its very existence as a Legislative body.

But the formation of a genuine democratic constituency by the legislation of 1885 altered all this. It was seen that the Lower House was, or would be soon, under the influence of the Labour masses, and that Labour was being rapidly coloured by a more or less indefinite Socialism. When an eminent Whig aristocrat had gaily declared, "We are all Socialists now!", the whole of the capitalist and trading class began to distrust the House of Commons as a palladium of Property, Religion, and Order; and they turned to the House of Lords as the last stronghold of our ancient social institutions and the rights of Property, whether inherited or acquired in business. For a whole generation the House of Peers has become the real, but unofficial Legislature of the Empire. Bills are debated in the Commons; but no measure of Reform, vitally affecting Society or Property, could pass unless it be approved by the Lords.

Old-fashioned Radicals and Labour Democrats kept on repeating the obsolete cry that the Peers "represent nothing but themselves." The exact contrary is the truth. To-day they represent the preponderant power of the rich, educated, and trained classes, the learned professions, the tradesmen, the owners of property real and personal, the titled orders down to the cadets of a city knight. And to these they add the interests of the Clergy, the Universities, official societies, the Army and Navy, and the miscellaneous classes whose capital is invested in the Empire, in agriculture, food, and drink. Of course, they only represent all these widespread interests in silent, secret, irregular, and obscure ways. They could hardly maintain their cause in any formal and direct conflict. All that they could do would be by indirect means, obstruction, procrastination, and false issues, to stave off any fundamental change in any of



the great social institutions, material or moral. "Thank God, we have a House of Lords," is the unspoken but profound conviction of the immense body of the higher and middle orders. There are no doubt plenty of rich men and men of aristocratic connections and pretensions in the Commons; but they and the great majority of M.P.'s are under the control of the democracy, and dare not vote as they would like. So Property, Church, Services, Professions, and Traders have lost trust in the Commons.

In this indirect and unperceived way, the House of Lords, since the defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule, has recovered for obstructive purposes the legislative authority it has lost ever since the age of Walpole and Chatham, and has again become after a century and a half a co-equal branch of the Legislature—and even something more. But there is a further element to this complex question. The bed-rock of the Constitution is the joint legislative authority of three independent powers—King, Lords, and Commons. The assent of the Crown is no longer supposed to be anything more than a formality. But the prestige and popularity of the Crown as a national asset has gained immensely during the seventy years of Victoria and Edward. And the Peers, as a sort of Society body-guard of the Crown, as the King's inseparable Court, have also gained not a little in popular interest. The public could not imagine a Crown such as that now worn by Edward VII., unless it were supported by a privileged Court. So that all ideas of "ending or mending" the House of Lords involve a fundamental shake to the Constitution as a whole. Now the Head of the British Constitution is at present extremely popular, even with the democracy. The public is not prepared to place the Crown alone face to face with a democratic House of Commons. This

could not be effected without a Revolution. And we are not ripe for revolutionary changes.

Needless to say that I do not accept—much less defend—the claim of the Lords to be the ultimate power in legislation. I am simply explaining the difficulties of the crisis, and deprecate the ignorant babble of democrats who say "Leave the Lords to us!" As Professor Dicey says in his *Law of the Constitution* (1889, p. 381), it is a maxim of the Constitution that the Lords must *ultimately* give way "to the deliberate will of the nation"; but no one can say when or how this has been made manifest. Governments have defied the will of the nation for years—laughed at it, and trampled on it. No doubt, if, at the opening of the session, the House of Lords flatly rejected the general programme of the Government, as formulated in the Speech from the Throne, and in the speeches of Ministers, the general indignation of the country would have been shown with such unanimity and violence that the Peers would have yielded or risked their existence. But it was inevitable that, after months of debate, the composite majority, large as it was, should become less cohesive. Education, Chinese coolies, Natal wars, India, Ireland, Labour—all in turn differentiate the great Liberal majority. The opposition of the Lords comes on some one of these measures, not on all together. And the party is not quite solid on any one of them.

The consequence of this is, that the Lords can defy the Commons on some definite point, whereon considerable sections of the party are not only lukewarm, but even disheartened and divided. And it is always difficult to show that "the deliberate will of the nation" is so keenly aroused to carry that particular Bill that the Lords will not dare to resist. If they "represented nobody but themselves," it would



be plain sailing. But, as I have shown, they silently represent immense forces of Wealth, Tradition, Experience, Self-Interest. All questions and parties here, as elsewhere, are becoming fused in the great antagonism of Conservative Capitalism against Democratic Labour. Now the Lords, however obsolete their special privileges have become, are now the last bulwark of the former, whilst the Commons are, in only modified degrees, the representatives of the latter. That the Democracy will at last have its way, I sincerely hope and believe. But the struggle must be very keen, and in this very conservative, rich, complex society of ours, must be protracted and doubtful.

I am only trying now to call attention to the crisis, its grave difficulties and its complicated nature. I put trust in the great experience, clear sense, and patient courage of the Prime Minister. It will need all his experience, patience, and resolution to lead to victory the motley hosts in his command. The great danger is this. By the law of the Constitution, the Lords may claim to reject any Bill that is not plainly desired by the nation. If led with skill and courage, they may force on a new Dissolution—possibly even a second. A dissolution is a cruel tax on the Commons, but only a pleasant holiday to the Lords. Drained by election expenses and jealousies, torn asunder by Catholics, Dissenters, Irishmen, Home Rulers, pro-Boers, pro-Bengalees, Socialists, Suffragettes, Trade Unionists, Imperialist Liberals, disappointed Radicals, and all the heart-burnings of a huge composite majority, the national verdict of 1906 might be doubtful in 1909. There, "like a cormorant," the Spirit of Evil sits, ever on the watch. And before the nation knew it, the food of the People might be taxed to fill the pockets of an organised conspiracy of capitalists.

XXII

A TRUE SENATE

(1906)

THE House of Lords is not only now an anomaly in our system, the only purely hereditary Chamber in the civilised world, but it is now become the burning problem of our modern politics. For all the resounding phrases of Radical defiance, the Peers really represent, and know that they have behind them, immense reserve forces of the rich, the experienced, the trading classes, the Church, the learned professions, the civil and military "services," and those whom Democracy and Socialism alarm. If it is said that "the Lords represent nobody but themselves," the retort is that the Lords secretly represent many millions of voters whom the M.P.'s they elected very imperfectly represent. Not a few Liberal members have but half a heart for the Bills they are pledged to support, and for which they actually vote. And not a few Labour members have been elected by men who would be sorry to see them get their way. Now, the Peers practically represent immense Conservative masses, held in reserve.

This fact, however unwelcome to all true Liberals, involves a most dangerous crisis, from which the only



issue, in the face of rising Democracy, is that which we see in Russia as the alternative—Constitutional Reform or violent Revolution. It is plain that Englishmen will not for ever submit to see the formal decisions of their elective Chamber permanently "blocked" by a petty knot of ordinary men whose right to legislate at all is the mere accident of birth. The fact that accident, coupled with the dishonesty and intrigues of influential men inside and outside the House of Commons, gives them a power which at first sight is preposterous, will only make the struggle more bitter. Thus, unless the two Houses can be brought into harmonious working the Constitution must suffer some violent shock.

We may assume that some sort of Upper House there will have to be. The country is certainly not prepared to take the plunge into a Single Democratic Chamber. All ideas of "ending" the House of Lords must be put aside as chimerical. All ideas of retaining it as it is may be put aside as dangerous folly. All ideas of revolutionary reconstruction may be regarded as at present premature. The immediate thing to be done is to consider how the way can be prepared to mend the present constitution of the House of Lords so that a violent collision between the Peers and the nation may be avoided or postponed.

Now, the essential principle which alone can justify the existence of a Second Chamber in a democratic society is the fact that its members enter it by some form of election, selection, service, or personal qualification—other than the accident of birth. The first thing to do is to put an end to the vicious and obsolete rule that hereditary right shall give legislative power. It would be a step towards this if the nation resolved that from a given date no new creation of a peer should endow his descendants with right to legislate.

This could be done at once without an Act of Parliament, if the great majority of the nation insisted on this being an understood practice, and that the consent of the Crown were obtained to its being made effective. This might begin by Resolution in the House of Commons. There is nothing to prevent the Crown from creating peerages for life; though the House of Lords some fifty years ago decided by resolution that a Life Peer could not sit and vote in their House. If it became a settled rule of politicians, at least of Liberal politicians, that no hereditary Peerage should in future be created, and if his Majesty were to be a consenting party to such a rule, the worst anomaly of the present system would receive a check.

The irony of the situation is that such a reform would be exceedingly popular with the Peers themselves. If the Crown and the nation agreed that no hereditary Peerages should be henceforth created, the actual hereditary Peers would receive a new dignity in that the roll of their special order was closed. There is nothing on which the Scotch Peers value themselves more than that for two centuries no new Peer has been added to their order. It may be taken indeed that a great body of support, both aristocratic and democratic, would be given to a self-denying ordinance agreed upon between the Crown and all progressive politicians that no hereditary Peerage should be created in future. Nobility would gain a new honour without any new privilege; the public would be freed from an antiquated obstruction without at all increasing the power of the titled class. The recent creations, in effect, though not in form, carried out this principle.

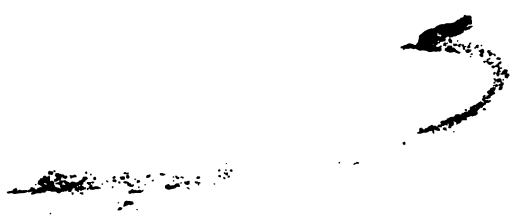
There is nothing to prevent the Crown from creating a Life Peer. Whether a Life Peer could sit



and vote in the House of Lords, without an Act of Parliament, is another matter. I doubt if that House, under the strain of the actual crisis, would venture again to close its doors to one who held the King's Patent. Lord Derby, at the height of his influence, and Lord Lyndhurst, by the magic of his eloquence, induced the Peers in 1856 to commit this folly. But the *Memoir* of the late Duke of Argyll has told us how nearly a well-qualified Life Peer came to take his seat without question (*Memoir*, ii. p. 11). It is exceedingly doubtful if the House would risk another struggle with a Liberal Government.

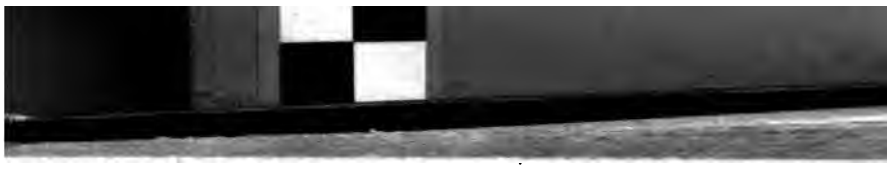
In any case, I maintain that a free creation of Life Peers, selected from men of known character and ability, who had long served the public and had done the State some service, would prepare the way for a Second Chamber of wisdom, prudence, and public spirit. The last creations give examples of the use to be made of eminent politicians who have no seat in the Commons. I should like to see fifty, or, if they could be found, even a hundred, such men named as the nucleus of a true Senate. It is not likely that the House of Lords would imperil their very existence by obstinately closing their doors against men who individually were much their superiors in public reputation, and who as a body represented the deliberate choice of the Crown and of the Government. If the Peers doggedly refused to admit Life Peers, it might be the time to try legislation and see if they would venture to throw out a Bill empowering Life Peers to sit by Statute, as Lords of Appeal do now.

If it became a practice of the Constitution not to create in future any hereditary peerage, and if a body of Life Peers, strong in numbers and reputation, were also enabled to sit in the House of Lords, the resist-



ance of the old House to reforms would be effectually neutralised, and a gradual reconstitution of the House might proceed on regular lines. An obvious reform would be the closing the House to Peers who simply succeed to a title. In time the Upper House would be called personally by writ as was once the rule. Their qualification would be personal—not hereditary. What the personal qualifications should be opens a very wide question which may be considered in a separate essay. For the present I limit myself to suggestions of immediate steps towards forming a true Senate by substituting personal for hereditary claims to pass laws for the nation.

I am quite aware that the average Radical view condemns any creation of new Peers, whether for life or not. The old-fashioned Reformer's nostrum for "abolition of the House of Lords" is not practical politics. England is not often, and not at all at present, in the mood for revolutionary change, unless the Peers were to act like Russian bureaucrats. I doubt if the country is even prepared to abolish the power of the Lords to throw out a Bill a second time, when again passed by the Commons. No such reform is possible without legislation which would involve a long and bitter struggle, for the whole constitutional rights of the Peers would be at stake. The suggestions I have made could be tried without a Bill at all, and would proceed in a tentative and gradual course of reform. The country, as a whole, desires a Second Chamber of qualified men. And I hold that it is more likely to get a competent Senate by gradually modifying the House of Lords than by any revolutionary attempt to suppress it altogether or to abrogate its legislative privileges at once.



XXIII

THE LORDS ONCE MORE

(1906)

THE crucial problem of our time, and one full of complications and puzzles, is the question of forming an Upper House worthy of our country and of the great duties which alone can justify the existence of a Second Chamber. Let Conservatives remember that our own House of Peers is the only remaining legislative body in the civilised world wherein the representatives of some five hundred families retain the controlling power over the entire law-making machine, and can at will reduce it to a deadlock. And this exists in a country which is nearly as advanced a democracy as is the Republic of France or of America. And let thoughtful Conservatives further reflect that all human history can produce no single example of an hereditary aristocracy permanently retaining exclusive prerogatives against the will of a great nation.

The appalling condition of Russia should make even the boldest reactionary hesitate before straining his obsolete prerogatives to the bursting-point. In theory, in law, by usage, the Russian nobles have as much right as has any English duke to "do what he likes with his own." But irresistible forces are teach-

ing them the dreadful consequences of persisting in enforcing their rights.

We need not consider the Radical idea of "getting rid of the Lords." Greece seems to be the sole example in Europe of a State with a Single Chamber —and the example is not encouraging. Whilst the great Republics of France and the United States retain their Senates, we may assume that this Conservative nation of ours will hesitate to follow the lead of—Greece. An Upper House of some kind we are destined to have. It seems equally clear that we will not for ever endure an hereditary Chamber such as no other civilised people submits to. The problem is to form a True Senate—with personal, not hereditary, title—to make laws for the nation.

I believe myself that we shall ultimately come to a truly elective Senate—and were I to draft a new Constitution I would suggest election for some long period by the various County Councils in proportion to the numbers of their own constituencies. But this would mean a fundamental revision of the Constitution, difficult and contentious legislation, and a deep social and political upheaval. I content myself for the present with suggesting a mode of gradual reform of the existing House of Lords, on less drastic lines, and feasible without any revolutionary Acts of Parliament.

I have already given reasons for our recurring to a system of Life Peers to be carefully selected from qualified public men as a mode of gradually permeating and reforming our Upper House. For the moment, I limit myself to pointing out what might be done in this way without any violent collision of parties and apart from disputed legislation. A good deal of the same kind has been quietly done of late—especially by recent Prime Ministers. A hundred Fitzmaurices, Courtneys, Shaw-Lefevres, and Morleys, would make



the House of Lords a useful and respected body in the State.

We are often told that great questions are discussed in the Lords with a knowledge, a sense of responsibility, and a breadth of view that is seldom heard in the Commons. There is much truth in this, and the reasons for it are many and plain. A Peer has no constituents to dazzle or to conciliate; he can speak out with freedom and sincerity; he speaks at his own time to a small and qualified audience; if he chooses to rise, it is because he feels himself master of the subject; and he is indeed himself very often an old official of great experience and knowledge. When men like Lord Lansdowne, the late Duke of Devonshire and Lord Goschen, Lord Roberts and Lord Rosebery, Lord Curzon and Lord Cromer, seriously give themselves to a "full-dress debate," the public has to listen, and not seldom learns a good deal, whether it likes their opinions or not. Therein lies the prestige of the House of Lords and its real hold on the country, that on great occasions it justifies its claims. Those who deprecate change in the marriage laws, in the suffrage, in Church, law, and the like, put their trust in the Peers, who have no constituents to badger them. And those who object to violent revulsions in Foreign policy know that a fair continuity of action will be maintained in the Lords.

It may be replied: Is not the House of Lords, then, an invaluable institution? No! Because behind the twenty or thirty men of great public experience and proven capacity, there are four or five hundred hereditary cyphers who take no part, and hardly care to attend or listen, but who vote mechanically at the party word of command, with no intelligible ground but ingrained prejudice and pride of caste. The fact that the House of Lords is often addressed by capable

statesmen, and thereby retains its hold on the country, is really an argument, if we consider it, that it should henceforth consist of capable statesmen. Let us get rid of the dead weight which has nothing behind it but hereditary privilege, and yet has the "controlling influence" in all matters of legislation.

I have no taste for paper constitutions and shall not pretend to make precise conditions and hard-and-fast rules. But working suggestions are a different thing and need not be embodied in formal clauses. Age has always been, and should be, a condition to qualify the members of a true Senate. It would not be reasonable to name a man a Senator until he had reached the age of thirty-five; nor would it be quite practical to name him after he had passed seventy-five. The ideal age perhaps would be between forty and sixty, but age limits are not much in favour in a country where Pitt was Prime Minister at twenty-four and Gladstone was Prime Minister at eighty-four. Service of the State in important functions or for long periods would be a most important qualification. And to this would be added eminence in law, science, or business; responsible office in local administration, public companies, and social institutions. The activities of our people are numerous and widespread; and it would be ridiculous to attempt to prescribe any narrow list of qualifications. Whenever a Senate is to be constituted legally by an amendment to the Constitution, it will no doubt be necessary to fix definite classes who would be eligible. But as we are now discussing the selection of competent Life Peers by direct creation by the Crown, it may be enough to suggest the kind of qualification needed. And the recent creations afford us admirable types.

All that is wanted for the moment is to turn into an understood political system the example tentatively



set by two recent Prime Ministers. If a hundred or a hundred and fifty capable men could be drawn from the House of Commons (present or past), from the diplomatic, colonial, civil, and military services; from County Councils, public institutions, co-operative and trade societies; from the ranks of Privy Councillors, Judges, King's Counsel, Royal societies, and great companies, publicists, professors, and learned societies —and without the paraphernalia of heralds, or the endowment of families, such men could be infused into the existing House without any legislation or bitter contest,—the nucleus of a true Senate would be there. The thirty or forty debating Peers would be glad to receive fresh blood. The five hundred silent and absent Peers would remain silent, absent, and harmless.

This scheme is not put forward in any party sense. Both parties ought to be represented. But, in view of the enormous disproportion of Peers at present, new creations should be in inverse ratio to the actual balance of parties. The creation of hereditary Peers might still be retained as at present for those who court rank and honour without power. An ancient monarchy naturally involves a gradation of rank and royal favours. Only this:—newly-created Peers *with hereditary titles* should have no right to sit in a Reformed Upper Chamber—either for themselves or their descendants.

XXIV

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1906)

It is now twenty-seven years since I made bold to urge on Mr. Gladstone the reform of parliamentary procedure. Much has been done in the way of reform since that date. But many of the old evils remain—some of them have actually increased in mischief. Now, as then, the system of business in the House of Commons has been generally felt to have ominous defects. Now, as then, we have seen the House silenced and paralysed by its own rules; legislation has been choked by the plethora of forms that it involves; the historic "inquest of the nation" tends to become an inorganic public meeting. A new House and a reforming Government were pledged to take it in hand. And as an old student of comparative jurisprudence I again make bold to ask, Why does the British Parliament adhere to obsolete methods of work which all other parliaments abroad and all modern councils and boards at home have utterly condemned and rejected? Why does it do its business in ways which would ruin a railway or a bank, and would make a county council an idle debating club?

In 1881-82 all thoughtful critics of the "deadlock



in the House of Commons" were insisting on some mode of closing the interminable debates. I protested against the use of the outlandish word *clôture*, but urged that some form of closure was indispensable and just. Well, closure has been adopted and has come to stay, and has been too often used in arbitrary and oppressive ways. To protect minorities against its abuse will be one of the first tasks of the new majority; but as no rules can make such abuse quite impossible, the real protection against abuse of the closure must always be found in the good faith of the Minister in charge and of the Speaker and his deputy.

A second reform which we demanded twenty-seven years ago was some check to be placed on the monstrous perversion of the right of *questions*, which had grown to be an intolerable and grotesque nuisance. In the absence of any power to reply or to cross-examine a Minister, "questions" become a mere means of advertising busy-bodies, wasting time, and cultivating bores. This has been to a certain extent remedied. But until "questions" can be subjected to some responsible control, and carry the right to press the Minister who answers, they had better be got out of the way altogether. They amuse the House as a game of "cross questions and crooked answers." No Minister worth his salt (of £2000 to £5000) ever tells anything that he does not desire to be known; and, as he seldom tells more than a fraction of the truth, he only misleads those who are weak enough to believe him to be telling the whole.

Years ago we protested against the intolerably long hours of debate—twelve hours, and at times "all night sittings," and sessions prolonged into September. And all this waste of time for nothing except now and then a petty administrative change, and, in happy times, one substantial reform, cruelly mangled and sterilised.

Something has been done to redress the evil of late sittings and sessions in the dog-days; but it is agreed that there is still an immense amount of sheer waste of time, play, dawdling, and parading in futile divisions through the lobbies. We all look to the head of a really business House of Commons to put his foot down on the vulgar scandal of tea-parties on the terrace, dinner-parties in the cellars, gabbling nonsense to stave off a division, systematic pairing, "blocking" by sheer trickery, and minorities consisting of overfed, noisy young "bloods," whipped up from balls and supper-rooms. If "society" hopes to keep its prestige and its privileges a little longer, it must not treat the Parliament of the Empire as if it were a music-hall or a smoking concert.

It is not the part of those who have not sat in Parliament to discuss the details of practical procedure, which may safely be left to the experience of the Prime Minister and the reforming zeal of a House entirely recast in tone, even more than in persons. But it is quite open to those who have studied the working of other parliaments and have sat in a business council to suggest one substantial change in form, which would at once relieve the House from pressure, and immensely facilitate the work both of government and of legislation. That reform is to delegate the whole of the business now consigned to committees of the whole House to small departmental committees, specially selected, sitting in suitable rooms "upstairs," and reporting to the House in printed reports after careful deliberation. This, no doubt, has been done at times in what are known as "grand committees." But from their constitution and methods of work they have not been of very much use, nor have they materially relieved the House of its ordinary work in committee. The proposal now made is that at the



opening of each session the House should nominate as many standing committees as there are separate ministerial departments: say finance, foreign affairs, army, navy, education, local government (or possibly, agriculture, post and railways), law, home, Scotland, Ireland, Colonies, India—that is, at least twelve or fourteen standing committees, each consisting of eleven or thirteen members, more or less. To one of such committees every Bill, or motion when passed by the House, would be referred for consideration.

If the committees altogether absorbed 165 members, this would amount to one-quarter of the whole, and would so far set free the other three-fourths. It is not proposed that the committees should be selected by the Government, or by the majority, but by a system of proportional representation. The incurable defects of proportional representation as applied to the parliamentary suffrage throughout the kingdom, or in separate constituencies, are these, that in a constituency of 10,000 or 15,000, those who agree in opinion have no adequate means of conferring and meeting; and, if they had, the masses of electors have no definite opinions cut and dried, and have no distinct choice of persons and policies ready formed to hand. The House of Commons is exactly the body where proportional representation could have a fair field and could be used with entire ease and success. It would be easy to apportion the members of the committees so as to give each party or group exactly the same proportionate strength in the committees that they hold in the House. If the total number of committee men were 165, a party that commanded two-thirds of the House could elect 110; a group which numbered one-fifth could elect 33; a group which numbered one-tenth could elect 16; a group which numbered only twelve could elect 3. Every four M.P.s could elect

one committee man; and, by careful selection, the whole body of committees would be an exact mirror of the House.

The twelve or thirteen committees should sit as committees on private Bills now sit, with power to call before them and examine any Minister in either House, to hear any M.P. who desired to address them, and to obtain information from Government offices or elsewhere. They should have power to sit at convenient hours whether the House were sitting or not, and even to meet when it was not in session. If they had power to summon and examine any Minister they would be able to exercise a control which the House itself has long lost. Such a power would necessarily imply the right to sit at need with strictly closed doors; and, in the case of such committees as those on foreign affairs, army, or navy, the members of them might be sworn in as privy councillors, and deliberate with the secrecy and the responsibility of a Cabinet.

A small committee, not in any case exceeding fifteen, sitting *in camera*, if it chose, with no person present but those specially summoned, could give a thorough examination to every clause of any Bill, especially if it could summon to assist it the legal and official servants of the State. The right to examine and even cross-examine any Minister, principal or subordinate, whether peer or commoner, would really make the answering serious and responsible questions an important duty, and would obviate the resort to a miscellaneous and idle system of public questions which never receive honest or complete answers. It does not follow that every piece of information obtained in committee need be made public, or even reported in express terms to the House. But the committee would make their report with full and



accurate knowledge of all necessary facts. As things now are, the House has to pass Bills and clauses without more knowledge of facts than it suits the Minister to disclose, and in the absence of the draftsmen and lawyers who alone can enlighten it on the effect of the intricate verbiage of a Bill. The proper chairman of each committee would be the Minister, principal or subordinate, for that department.

When the committee had fully considered its Bill, the chairman would submit to the House a printed report containing the conclusions of the committee or of the majority, with reasons and, if necessary, tables of returns or legal opinions obtained. The minority could add their own report, and any member could raise a new point when the report was before the House. It is obvious how greatly superior in convenience and business efficiency would be such a course of patient study of clauses, with expert advice, as compared with the rough and tumble of committees of the whole House, where intricate clauses are tossed about from side to side in a noisy House, with one or two hundred members chatting, sleeping, running in and out, not one in ten having an idea what is the immediate business.

The way in which Acts of Parliament are hatched has long been the scandal of our constitution, the despair of business men, and the insoluble puzzle of the law courts. The Legislature is found to have said things it never meant to say, and to have left unsaid that which it intended. Who can be surprised? A Minister, with his draftsmen, has prepared an elaborate Bill full of technical details which he himself understands most imperfectly, and which the ordinary M.P. does not understand at all. They have been wrangling for hours over clauses. A few men on the Opposition side, with expert knowledge, press for

amendments which favour their own interest. The Minister cannot meet them with equal readiness. His supporters are tired, puzzled; they have ladies on the terrace, or they cannot be got away from dinner-parties, dances, or theatres. The Whip gets anxious, and whispers that he thinks the troublesome people must be squared. A hurried draft of concession or compromise is prepared, without time for due consideration or expert advice as to its working. The Opposition is "placated"; the Minister saves his credit by the skin of his teeth; the Bill becomes law; and the public smarts under some fresh miscarriage of justice or administrative knot.

This is no exaggerated picture of legislative methods. Ministers, officials of all kind, permanent secretaries of departments, draftsmen, lawyers, judges are all agreed that it is a system of miserable impotence and confusion. They struggle against it; and by energy and self-sacrifice stave off some of the worst consequences. But they have to endure many of its evils in silence. The evils are absolutely inevitable so long as Parliament persists in the obsolete system of settling the intricate details of long Bills in committees of the whole House, which necessarily become either a scramble with varying chances, or else are passed mechanically without consideration at all by arbitrary guillotine. The House would never have endured such a method so long, had it not been that Mr. Gladstone revelled in argumentative tussles where he had no rival or match; and in Mr. Balfour's time the majority acquiesced in automatic closure by compartments, calmly abdicating all the duties of a House of Commons.

It would pass the wit of man to devise any plan whereby a complicated Bill of 150 clauses could be settled in an assembly of 200 to 300 persons, moving



up and down, in and out, three-fourths of them busy with other things, and not one in ten able to follow the discussion without expert advice and printed materials before them. Many a ministerial Bill is as complicated and technical as some private Bills promoted by a railway or a corporation. But who would dream of sending a Bill for a new branch line, or a gas or water Bill, to be settled by the whole House in loose order? Yet this has to be done with many a public measure of infinitely more importance than any railway or gas Bill.

If the whole of the business now muddled over in committee of the whole House were relegated to special standing committees sitting in proper chambers "upstairs," it is obvious that an immense saving of time would be effected, and also a great acceleration of legislative output. As things now stand, one large contentious Bill, at most two or three such Bills, are the utmost any Government can succeed in pushing through in the weary seven months between January and September. Sometimes a ridiculous little Bill, like the sham Aliens Bill of 1905, blocks the way and drags on week after week, ending in mere flourishes and wanton mischief. So, too, the hollow Unemployed Bill ended in a nauseous kind of smoke. And the late Government plaintively wailed out that they could not proceed with large and urgent measures because, in fact, they were choked with their own smoke. Why this deadlock? Because a Bill, even a bogus Bill, meant as a vulgar election cry, or a sham Bill designed to meet an awkward demand, has to be tossed about, like a football in a scrimmage, in a full House which gives every facility for bunkum and obstruction, and yet in which no serious business can be taken up until the scrimmage has kicked itself off the field.

Real working committees would sit, of course, simultaneously, not necessarily all at the same hour, or even on the same day; but there would be no reason why eight or ten serious Bills might not be considered in the same session, just as eight or ten private Bills now are considered day by day in different rooms. Between January and April eight or ten measures could have been in due order reported to the House. The House, of course, would not be bound by the finding of the committee. It might reject the whole scheme once for all, or it might return it to the committee for reconsideration, with any "instruction" or comment. The point would be that the whole House would not attempt the impracticable and mischievous task of trying to do the work of committee in a miscellaneous scramble of 200 or 300 members, many of whom have neither special knowledge of the business, nor particular interest in it, unless perhaps to worry, obstruct, or advertise themselves.

The House—once relieved of the weary work of passing, in unwieldy meetings of a desultory kind, interminable strings of technical clauses, relieved of the idle worry of trumpery "questions," the moving for "returns,' nomination of commissions, etc., all which purely departmental business would go to the proper departmental committee, not to the full House —would get rid of sources of delay, trifling, and solicitation. All need or excuse for prolonged public sittings would be at an end. Sittings from 2 P.M. to midnight, even with a break, and still occasionally prolonged to the small hours of the morning, are utterly irrational and destructive of true legislation. They exhaust Ministers; they encourage lounging in and out; they make the whole atmosphere of the place desultory and unreal. The average man does



not keep his mind on the stretch upon the same business for more than four or five hours to any useful result. When the House sits for eight, ten, or twelve hours, even with a dinner interval, the practice grows up for ordinary members to drop in once, or it may be twice, making up four or five hours of actual attendance at debate. The ordinary member may spend three or four more hours somewhere within reach. But the professional or the "smart" M.P. is satisfied if he can put in an appearance in debate of an hour or two in the course of the week, and turn up in time to vote when he has received 'a three-line whip.' All this make-believe of being a legislator is encouraged and almost excused by prolonging the sittings to ten hours, which is far more than flesh and blood, body and bones, can bear.

This scandal can only be removed by making the public sittings of the House half as long—say, four to five hours,—but ensuring that these shall be sittings of real continuous work. If this limit were observed, and the House rose at 7 P.M. (and never sat later than 10 P.M.), members could be required to attend regularly; the division lists and perhaps even attendances could be recorded and published; and constituencies could know next morning where their member had been. But public sittings of five hours could only be secured by relegating the whole business now done in committee of the whole House to departmental committees sitting simultaneously "upstairs." In county councils and in most deliberate bodies it is the rule to require members attending to enter their names in the register of the day, and a wholesome rule it is. M.P.s who are proud to have their names recorded at a public dinner or a great society "crush" would find their energies stimulated if their attendances at St Stephen's crush received the same publicity. The mischief is that the

old superstition of eighteenth-century gentlemen still survives, that the House of Commons is an aristocratic club, not the engine-house of a mighty empire, burdened with the hard lives of countless millions who toil and cry for help.

It will be said that the method of special or select committees has been tried, and with no great result. But "grand committees" have usually been far too large, and selected only to gratify friends or to "placate" opponents; and they often admit the very men who give most trouble. The wreckers of Bills may be heard, but they are not the right persons to decide on the issue. Permanent standing committees, carefully chosen by the whole House, and in fact an authentic mirror of it, with the Minister or his deputy in the chair, would be free from many of the evils which neutralise the work of "select" committees. And when these select committees had reported, the old machinery had still to be gone through, so that the result was too often waste of time as well as futile labour to all concerned. There would be no difficulty in adding a qualified member occasionally to a committee, or in members exchanging from one to another. If a Minister were chairman of a committee, and it were thought essential to examine him for information, the chair would be taken for the time by a deputy-chairman, nominated for the occasion. A special select committee might even be formed to hold occasional or emergency sittings during the recess. On some such plan as this every foreign parliament, every county council, every company, bank, or public institution does its work. The British House of Commons, alone of modern chambers, tries to settle committee details in a fluid crowd, where garrulity, obstruction, and desultory habits have forced ministers to resort to the scandal of "closure by compartments."



Any such scheme of standing departmental committees involves the surrender of the whole of the work of Private Bill legislation. The system on which railways, corporations, and companies obtain their Acts may not be so rife as it once was of glaring scandals, but it is still an anomaly charged with mischief and hardship. It survives, just as the trial of election petitions by the House itself survived, owing to powerful vested interests, and the jealousy of Parliament not to part with any of its privileges. Landlords and capitalists in Parliament struggle to keep all dealings with property under their own eye, and they shrink from giving outside authorities judicial and legislative powers. But they will have to do so. The civilised world can offer no spectacle of "how-not-to-do-it" more grotesque than the sight of a committee-room in the Lords sitting on a complicated Bill promoted by a great railway or a corporation. The room is hung with plans, sections, huge tabulated schedules, or engineers' models. Great lights of science are examined by consummate masters of every forensic art. Expert witnesses (the "d—d liars" of a great judge) are heard day by day to expound mysteries which only a trained professional can follow. The evidence would fill a Blue-book and costs £1000 a day. All this time the chairman (usually a man of sense and experience) does his best to follow the discussion, and he gets a fair notion of what the main points are. By his side sits a master of fox-hounds yawning; a weather-beaten colonel picks his teeth; a dandy writes answers to "smart" invitations; and a young guardsman works out calculations in his betting-book. After three weeks of this dreary farce, when £20,000 have been sunk, my lords find that the preamble is passed.

If this putrescent scandal of Private Bill legislation

were done away, the rooms, staff, and machinery upstairs would be set free, and the call on members' time and labour immensely reduced. Committees—the permanent departmental committees—would meet at 10 A.M. for two or three hours' sitting, three-fourths of the House being free from attendance altogether. There would then be ample time for a sitting of the House itself, of four or five hours—say, from 2 P.M. to 7 P.M. Abolish night sittings altogether, excepting for some urgent occasion for one or at most two hours, but always rising before midnight. That is how all other parliaments, county councils, senates, boards of companies, and every business chamber in civilised countries do their work. There ministers get to work at 8 A.M. or even 6 A.M.—sovereigns and autocrats abroad have to do it, to say nothing of the "strenuous" presidents of the West like Roosevelt and Diaz. British ministers retain the obsolete habits of the Harleys, Walpoles, Pitts, and Norths of the eighteenth century, when men dined in the early afternoon, and supped, gambled, and gossiped at midnight.

French statesmen, German, Italian statesmen, do not rush off to the Alps or the seaside for "week-ends" in the midst of session. Nor do bank and railway managers, chief clerks of great industries, run away from the office, every five or six days, for forty-eight hours or even a week. Those who are responsible for the tremendous concerns of the British Empire tear about the country, even in session, to Scotland or Cornwall, Cromer or Torquay, by rail or motor, as if they were travelling "bagmen" doing their trade round. And when a cabinet council is summoned noble lords and right honourable gentlemen rush up to town, just as "bookies" gather in haste to a race meeting or a football contest. We pay British



ministers £5000 a year, without expecting them to "attend to the shop," as foreign ministers on a fifth of their salary have to do, as business managers on a tenth of it have to do.

The excuse for this gad-about habit of British rulers is that, in the first place, they are country gentlemen and have to look after their estates; and in the next place, they are so much exhausted by parliamentary duties of ten or twelve hours a day, that they must refresh themselves with sport, golf, or house parties. Now, the temper of the new democracy is against paying the owners of great estates £5000 a year, and it is in favour of requiring men who undertake public duties to stick to them. If ministers were obliged to sit in Parliament not more than four hours in a day, twenty to twenty-four hours a week, their health would gain, and they could prepare their Bills, compose despatches, and meet in council without any hurry or strain at all. Since one-fourth of the present M.P.s do not own motors or even carriages and cannot afford cabs at night, late sittings are a gross social injustice and offence. To reduce the hours of sitting in Parliament is the first condition of "efficiency" in Government—as it is also in legislation.

The preposterous arrangement of sessions in the year is another scandalous survival of ancient custom, entirely due to habits of "sport," foreign touring, and "society functions." Parliament seldom meets till fox-hunting is ended, and by ancient superstition is supposed to rush off to kill grouse on the 12th of August. It goes to races, balls, Lord's, and courts, from April to July. Then it goes to the Highlands, "globe-trotting," or country seats from August to February. A shameless neglect of duty. A serious business Parliament would arrange to hold sessions in

all the four quarters of each year, as all business and professional men do. It would meet, say, in four sessions of eight weeks each, leaving twenty weeks for recess—perhaps a long summer recess of ten weeks and three others of three weeks each.

Why Parliament should swelter in London during July, August, and even September, and then spend the autumn in the Highlands, and the winter killing vermin and poultry in the shires, bleak moors, and boggy woods, no one can say, unless that it suits sporting men, magnates, society queens and their daughters. No other Parliament behaves with such insolent indifference to public demands, and such eager care for its own pleasures. The needs of this vast empire do not vegetate or hibernate between August and February. They say, of course, that the ministers get on as well without Parliament, and indeed, very often, even better. But from August to February ministers also are scattered up and down the three kingdoms, hundreds of miles apart, and hundreds of miles away from their offices, permanent officials, papers, and libraries. When a war breaks out, a revolution abroad or a riot at home, the minister telegraphs to a clerk in town to send down the more important papers to peruse in the country.

The usual reply is that when the hot war of Parliament is over, and the Temple of Janus at Westminster is closed—the ecumenical Temple of Janus is very rarely closed,—ministers require a close time to meditate and recruit. Were ministers and parliament men denied these indispensable holidays, great magnates, we are told, would hardly consent to sacrifice their ease by serving the State; great capitalists would not give us their financial experience; lawyers could not afford to assist the nation by their learning; and eldest sons would not gain the necessary



training for public life. This is a dilemma which alarms the classes more than the masses. The latter simple folk cannot be brought to see why magnates, capitalists, men of fashion, and turfites should want to sit in the House of Commons at all. Perhaps the value of their assistance hardly compensates for the inconvenience that during six months on end the House of Commons is idle, and even the Government of the Empire is dispersed about the nation in a round of house parties, "local functions," and country amusements.

This is not the place—nor is a mere outsider the man—to enter on many smaller, more or less material and formal, changes which are needed to make the House of Commons a really business chamber. The trouble comes from retaining forms inherited from the days of Plantagenet and Tudor kings. We submit to trammels fatal to serious work, because they come down from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The "Mother of Parliaments" is really the great-grandmother of parliaments in its old-fashioned furbelows. First of all comes the huge absurdity of meeting in a chamber which will not seat comfortably half the members, and into which only three-fourths of them can be crushed at a pinch so as to hear worse than in the shilling gallery at a theatre. The inevitable result is that a third, or even half, of the members habitually stay away or lounge about the precincts. As the nation will not give them sitting room and hardly even standing room, it seems plain that the nation only expects them to look in by groups, and for special occasions. The first condition of a working House is a chamber wherein every one of the 670 can have his own seat. The indecent scramble for places, the silly trick of ticketing seats at midnight, the crowding the gangways and balconies as if it were the pit of a

theatre, is utterly unworthy of a rational people and an Imperial Parliament.

We all know why, when the Houses were rebuilt, the absurd narrowness of space was retained. Simply because the oblong form of the old thirteenth-century chapel of St. Stephen had to be preserved. All other parliaments, councils, and large deliberative chambers have adopted the semicircular form, which alone enables a body of some hundreds to see and hear each other. Half the waste of time, obstruction, disorder, and lounging habits of the House of Commons is due to the fact that members have no places of their own, no room to sit, cannot be got into the House all together, and, when in it, can sleep on the back benches as quietly as in their own libraries. An oblong chamber that could seat 670 members and the clerks and staff would only increase the difficulty of hearing, the noisy ways, and the opportunity of slumbering unseen. If the House of Commons often looks like a club smoking-room, the reason is that it has to squeeze itself into that Procrustes bed—the palace chapel of the Plantagenets.

I hesitate to suggest how great a reform would be a time limit of speeches. Honourable members would regard that as worse than sacrilege. But the time limit for speeches at the London County Council has worked admirably. It is always extended by a vote whenever necessary. It never suppresses any serious argument, whilst it annihilates bores. Speakers avoid verbiage or repetition. The House listens to speeches which cannot last long, and will soon be answered from the other side. It gives life and point to every debate. It makes obstruction impossible. If in the last Parliament there had been a time limit for speeches, the late Government would have been beaten a dozen times over. Even Sir A. Acland-Hood could not have



found relays of Bartleys and Flannerys. Twenty minutes, or at the utmost half an hour, is enough to enable the average speaker to say what he has to say. Indeed, it is very often found to be more than enough. A front bench speaker or the spokesman of any group or cause could always rely on the courtesy of the House to extend the limit on good cause shown. At the London County Council I have heard the time limit on a Budget opening extended four successive times by a general vote. A time limit of twenty minutes for ordinary speeches would do more to give life to Parliament and to reduce desultory habits than any other single form.

I abstain from touching on some other reforms, trivial in themselves, but highly significant and not unimportant. Official costume, court dress, swords (swords in the twentieth century in a democratic Parliament!), all this is a silly remnant of extinct manners, and now even a cause of offence. There are now at least 150 members to whom these badges of social classification are both ridiculous and odious. The men chosen and supported by barefoot Irish peasants and by British miners, spinners, and carpenters cannot afford these clothes and accoutrements, nor would they consent to appear in the guise of Lord Mayor's footmen or actors in the *School for Scandal*. The age has outgrown this playing at the manners of Queen Anne. And the House of Commons, with some fifty workmen, eighty Nationalists, and a score or two more of men who were not bred at Eton and Oxford, and do not attend at levees or "At Homes," is a very different place from that in which members required a property qualification, and where Edmund Burke was held unworthy to enter a Cabinet.

We all trust that, with the scandalous bonus given to the rich by the system of plural voting, there will

disappear also the unjust and mischievous practice of prolonging a general election over several weeks. As in other countries, elections should be held throughout the four nations on the same day, which ought to be made a bank holiday. I would also prohibit the use of motors and carriages, unless actually occupied by their owner or his agents. The lavish use of vehicles to carry electors to the poll is a very squalid kind of bribery which ought to be suppressed like "treating" and "hired vehicles." We need not labour the payment of all *bona fide* election expenses with the House and the Government we now have secured. The antique paraphernalia of writs, returns, re-election on taking office, "swearing-in," and other mummery, will have to go. Nothing should prevent the Dissolution of Parliament by Royal Proclamation, and the holding of a general election on one given day, at any convenient day at a future and reasonable date. The mediæval rules about dissolutions and elections, with the obsolete jealousy of the Crown which forces both into one Royal Proclamation, cause nothing but trouble and serve no useful end. The superstition that the British Constitution, like Nature, "abhors a vacuum," and insists on the formula *Le Parlement est mort—Vive le Parlement!*—is hardly worthy of the twentieth century.

The twentieth century is here. The new democratic Parliament is also here. And 500 Liberal, Labour, and Nationalist M.P.s will have to conform their practice to the new conditions, or the nation, at last roused to assert itself, "will know the reason why."



PART II

LITERATURE AND ART



I

THE USES OF RICH MEN

(*From the "Forum," N.Y.*, 1893)

WHY do we not make a better use of our rich men? We waste them, and let them run to seed anyhow, a burden to themselves and a nuisance to the public. We ought to utilise them, and make citizens of them, lifting them from their condition of ineptitude and degradation to become respectable members of the commonwealth. Like the tides, the sun, or the negro race, they could do a great deal of useful work, if they were properly turned to it. As it is, we let their vast motive power run to waste, like the waters at Niagara, in noise and foam.

They are not bad fellows—at least not all of them. Many of them are really anxious to do something, and to become decent citizens. They bore themselves intolerably; and are grateful to any one who will show them how they can do something that men will care for, or how to spend their money in ways that cannot be called either selfish or mean. Many a man who has inherited millions is gnawed with envy as he watches a practical man turning an honest penny. How he would like to earn an honest penny! He never did: he never will; and he feels like a dyspeptic

invalid watching a hearty beggar enjoying a bone or a crust.

Many a rich man is capable of better things; but he does not know how to begin. The one thing that his wealth cannot buy is—an appetite, the zest for useful work, the consciousness of being a worker in the hive, and not a drone. A Parisian *viveur*, whose dinner occupied him three hours each night at Bignon's, was once watching sadly a young English tourist eating his first square meal after six weeks' climbing in the Alps. "Ah!" said the epicure with a sigh, "if one could only sit down to *pâté de foie gras* with a mountain appetite!" But that is their mistake. It is the *toujours perdix—toujours pâté de foie gras*—which robs them of appetite, of zest, of the love of work. But it is not too late. Much may be done by a proper regimen. And I propose to show that there are still ways in which a rich man—even a very rich man—may yet become useful and happy.

The ancients managed this matter much better than we do. At Athens and in many other Greek republics there was a remarkable institution known as the Λειτουργίαι, Liturgies, that is, *public services* of rich men. In Christian times the word became limited to a religious service, or public worship; and hence the word *Liturgy* now means a form of congregational prayer, or ritual of divine service. But in ancient times, and originally, the word and the thing had a far wider meaning. And we might learn a useful lesson by restoring the ancient republican Liturgy, or costly public service offered to the State by rich men.

At Athens the Liturgies were legal and constitutional offices, imposed periodically and according to a regular order, by each local community on citizens rated as having a capital of more than a given amount.



They were special taxes on the conspicuous rich men, originally imposed as the equivalent of peculiar privileges and rights; just as a feudal barony, with its powers and revenues, implied the obligation of military and civil service and the maintenance of an armed force, police, and justice. But when democratic equality was established at Athens, the special taxation of the rich was maintained and largely increased.

It was not a simple tax; it was not unpopular; it was no sordid affair of money. It always remained a *public service*, an honorary distinction, a coveted office, a duty to be filled by taste, skill, personal effort, and public spirit. Rich men contended for the office, greatly exceeded their legal liability, often ruined themselves in their zeal, and sometimes gained so dangerous an influence by their magnificence, that Aristotle in his *Politics* warns the democracies of the risk. But much of the artistic and intellectual preëminence of Athens was due to this favourite institution. We have suffered this noble custom to die out. We leave our millionaires in their sordid impotence. Financial reformers talk big about a mere mechanical progressive income-tax. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain made some brave speeches about "Ransom." But the true ransom is the revival of that noble republican institution, the Liturgies of the Rich.

The Athenian Liturgies were for very varied purposes. As magistrates and ministers certain men of wealth were charged with the cost and production of the public dramas, choruses, processions, games, embassies, and feasts. In time of war, they were called on to man and arm a ship for the fleet. But almost the whole of the public amusements, religious and artistic ceremonies, were provided freely for the people at the cost and by the personal efforts of selected men of

wealth. We owe the tragedies and comedies of the great poets to the munificence of these wealthy patrons. The temples, statues, and monuments with which Athens was crowded were mainly the gifts of public benefactors. One street was named from the tripods which the *Choragi* had won as prizes for success in their Liturgy, and the lovely monument of Lysicrates was dedicated to enshrine such a prize. The legal institution developed into an honoured custom, whereby the chief ambition of a rich man came to be that of making splendid gifts to his fellow-citizens.

Theatres, race-courses, temples, baths, aqueducts, gardens, libraries, academies, colonnades, pictures, statues, books, and museums—all were showered upon favoured cities by wealthy men who possessed or who coveted the name of a citizen. Herodes Atticus was no hero: but to this day the traveller at Athens is reminded of the public spirit of old times by the stupendous remains of his gifts to his native city—perhaps the most lavish munificence of a private person recorded in history. Twenty millions to-day would not suffice to pay for the public works which were presented to Greece by this very useful rich man. The Romans carried out the system of Liturgies on a scale even vaster, but in a spirit far less pure. With the Romans it was not so much honour as ambition which suggested their munificence; rich men sought power rather than immortality; they gave gladiatorial shows and baths, rather than libraries and tragedies. In Mediæval times, public munificence was confined to churches and religious offerings. It is the artistic Liturgy of republican Athens which we should seek to restore.

In this matter the United States are far ahead of the rest of the civilised world; but, even in America, the practice is quite in its infancy. Prominent citizens



in some of the most advanced States have made to the public splendid gifts of libraries, museums, and colleges. It is an excellent beginning which has shown the Old World the virtue of the republican spirit. In Europe there is as yet but little of the kind. In England, mainly in the Midlands and in the North, something has been done—but exclusively by traders and men of business. The way has been shown by Anglo-Americans, such as Mr. Peabody and Mr. Carnegie. We have our Masons and our Edwardses. Once or twice a rich tradesman or a manufacturer has presented the nation or his native town with a collection of pictures, a museum, a library, a college, or even a park. It is a striking fact that these noble examples of public spirit have been given amongst us almost without exception by obscure middle-class men, whose wealth no man suspected, whose generosity was a surprise even to their neighbours, and whose munificence is usually accepted with a chilly and even ungracious civility.

The class which is most conspicuously wanting in this form of public spirit is the most conspicuous class now extant as a class in the whole world—the English aristocracy of hereditary wealth. Of all rich men they are the only powerful order which, outside their own estates, never give the public anything—except their formal subscriptions to hospitals and the like. In the way of munificence—nothing. One can hardly recall a single instance of a great peer or great landowner giving the public anything from their millions. Their idea of public munificence is to display their splendid selves. Their noble example to the people is to exhibit their own luxury and extravagance. The only form of Liturgy they recognise is the admission of the people to witness the stateliness of their own lives. They build palaces—to

live in themselves; they have parks, picture-galleries, libraries, and collections, which they keep up rather for pride than for any personal pleasure in them; and which the public are admitted to stare at one day in the week (when the family are away) at half-a-crown a head.

No doubt, the obsolete law of entail, and the obsolescent tradition of "keeping up the family place," account for much of this. They devote large sums, it is true, to improve and develop their estates. But they often inherit enormous fortunes in other forms, and marriage, minorities, and the growth of towns, from time to time throw into their laps heaps of ready money. All this goes in race-horses, yachts, orchids, deer-forests, and entertainments—but not one penny to the public. The public are allowed to look on from a proper distance. They can see the horses race, the yachts sail; they may not look at the orchids or the deer, but, when a concert or ball is given, they may stand in the gutter and watch the carriages drive up to the *choragus'* door. This sublime self-devotion of the rich aristocrat is imitated from the royal caste. In ancient times kings and emperors everywhere made splendid gifts to the people, and almost the whole of the public enjoyments in the Roman Empire were presented by the Cæsars, their family, ministers, or officials. Now, kings and emperors receive—even tout for—presents, but never give. The aristocrats are only too ready to learn the new version of *noblesse oblige*. They give only to themselves. It is treat enough for the public to be suffered to see them enjoying themselves.

America shows us examples of a very different spirit. There are plenty of towns in the United States which are crowded with buildings and institutions freely presented by rich citizens to the public. America



is fortunate in never having known on its soil the poisonous seed of feudal entail and privileged orders. Nor is the American people so eager as are the vulgar in Europe to gaze at a luxury which they are not allowed to share. When rich men in America squander fortunes on themselves, they have little opportunity for personal ostentation or feudal pomp; and they can hardly persuade themselves that their extravagance is a civic duty and a public boon, as princes and nobles in Europe are taught to do. But even in America there is much to be done to show the social justification of great wealth. The donors of libraries, museums, and colleges, do not come as a rule from the ranks of the most conspicuous millionaires, and the proverbial "gold-bugs" are often conspicuous for their absence from the noble roll of public benefactors. We are told in Europe that these gilded *coleoptera* are dying of ennui and auriferous plethora. Why do they not show their fellow-citizens how to form a grand gallery of art, how to create a high-class theatre, how to found a great scientific museum?

There is almost no limit to the forms in which rich men could be of use if they tried, and to the public benefactions they could confer if they put their minds to it. Such grand institutions as the Cooper Institute or the Lick Observatory are an honour to the people amongst whom such splendid examples of public spirit are common. But let us say a word for that rarer form of munificence which we saw to be established as a regular system at Athens. That is the artistic rather than the scientific or educational form of public endowments. We need hardly say more as to the vast service to the community conferred by the foundation of a library or a college. It is obvious and familiar. Words can make it no clearer, nor could they heighten the public sense of benefit.

The artistic benefaction is not so familiar, and is more in need of recommendation and encouragement. No millionaire ever seems to think of giving his fellow-citizens a series of free musical entertainments, a historic pageant, much less a free dramatic performance.

All the great dramas of antiquity, the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles, the comedies of Aristophanes and Menander, the lyric choruses, the sacred dances, and processional festivals, were all without exception the gifts of rich men to their fellow-citizens; no man bought his seat, no man was shut out, no one was expected to contribute. When Æschylus vanquished Phrynichus, or Sophocles won the prize from Euripides, the victory was decided not by the money taken at the doors, nor by the number of nights that the *Œdipus* was "run," but by the voice of trained judges. And the rich *choragus*, who had lavished his wealth in mounting the *Prometheus* or the *Antigone*, was amply repaid by the honour of having shown the public a masterpiece in a worthy setting. The tripod he carried home on success (the very bill for which was included in his outlay) remained as a sacred heirloom to his descendants.

There are certain forms of art-culture which no state and no municipality, however rich and liberal, can ever provide for itself out of its public revenues. Town halls, senate houses, public offices, even libraries and museums, may be raised out of public funds by popular vote. But reasonable economy, or at least strict business value for the sums voted, will be, and ought to be, considered. The highest forms of art, which it is the duty of the best civilisation to present as types to all citizens, have no market price at all. They are above price; and, in order to produce their moral and social effects, they ought to be treated





as outside of all economical conditions. How is a state or a town to obtain a collection of ancient masters, of priceless Raffaelles and Titians? Where is it to buy a Louvre or a Vatican? Who would vote the people's money to make another Versailles? Good or bad, the palaces, picture galleries, collections of antiquities, gardens and parks of Europe, have been created by princes and by them ceded to the State. The age of princes is practically over in the West, where they retain here and there the form and style of sovereignty, but nowhere its real functions and powers. But the age of rich men is not at all over. On the contrary, they are richer than ever, and the means of providing the public with splendid art and noble enjoyments has passed from princes into the hands of millionaires. The millionaires have the means; and they alone have it; but as yet they miserably fail to recognise their part.

The day may come when the world will have agreed to abolish rich men altogether as an obsolete institution. And certainly no anarchist or communist is working so desperately to hurry on that day as are the rich men themselves. The day, too, may come when the people will have so much taste, public spirit, and passion for the beautiful, that they will be ready to lavish their public revenues on artistic masterpieces. Something of the kind may be observed in France, and perhaps in Italy. In France it is understood that the State and the municipalities will buy pictures, statues, gardens, galleries, and fountains with a free hand out of the people's taxes, and will build palaces and halls, subvention theatres, and provide splendid spectacles for the people from national and civic funds. The result is that, in France, no private person ever gives the public anything, and that public money is spent on works of art with what would be

called wanton extravagance in England and America. Here, and generally amongst a Protestant race of Saxon origin, it is not our way to provide beautiful things out of public money with that princely magnificence which many beautiful things require. An English-speaking race is economical, business-like, and jealous of anything like æsthetic extravagance. Nay, the strong Puritan element in English and American communities has stirrings of conscience against any form of art but that which is very narrow and quite conventional. It is hopeless to expect that, for many a long day, the higher forms of art will be adequately provided for the people in any English-speaking country by public funds voted by popular bodies.

Here is the chance for rich men to cut in and supply a "felt want." For the present at any rate, we have got the rich men, and a field lies open to their energies, in which no competition is possible. English and American tax-payers will not pay the sums required by the truly noble forms of art. Art for the people is accordingly driven by the competition of the market to its more vulgar forms; and the civilisation of the age is *pro tanto* debased. The rôle of the rich man is to show his fellow-citizens what taste, energy, and generosity can do. The Midases of the railway and money "hells" are not supposed to possess any quality of these three but the second. But the men of hereditary wealth in England claim to have a monopoly of the first, if not of the third; and there is now in America a large order of men having inherited fortunes who value themselves on a culture and refinement quite unique and incommunicable. We are told that the old Faubourg St. Germain and the historic *principii* of Rome do not furnish an order more plainly superior to their fellow-citizens



and more cruelly condemned to enforced indolence by the impossibility of entering the vulgar turmoil of "politics." Here then is a career of public usefulness marked out for the American citizen who combines in himself wealth, leisure, and the higher culture.

The only chance of a really great and elevating theatre is to carry it on without regard to direct profit. Recently Lord Tennyson's *Foresters* was tried in London but found no public encouragement. Regarded as a "woodland masque" and nothing more, it was sufficiently dramatic to sustain the lyrical poetry, bright music, and graceful tableaux of the piece. Though not a stirring play, it was a work of art as a lyrical interlude. But the British public would have none of it, preferring any rowdy nonsense or vapid melodrama. In Paris the principal theatres are under State patronage and have public subventions. That is out of the question in England or America. No great historic theatre was ever long maintained in its perfection on strict commercial lines. The day may come when the public will pay the value of a truly beautiful creation; but the day is far off. The world would never have had the *Agamemnon* and the *Œdipus*, the *Birds*, and the *Clouds*, if the citizens of Athens had had to pay ten drachmas for a seat, and if Æschylus and Sophocles had had to watch the till anxiously every night. But the same principle holds good of music, the opera, the orchestra of every kind. All the great instrumental pieces of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner, were aided by wealthy patronage; and they would never have been produced at all, if they had solely depended on the money taken at the doors. It was a very bad form of patronage, full of evils and humiliations of its own. No one would wish to revive such a system; and indeed it never can be revived. The age of the Waldsteins, Lobkowitzes, and Prince

Archbishops, has passed away. But the general rule holds good. The greatest things in music have never been produced on mere commercial lines. And they are even less likely to be produced now.

Music, the drama, with all other art, having been handed over to the *entrepreneur* and the competition of the market, tempting profits have been offered to the artist, but only under conditions which tend to lower the art. A brilliant musical performer may make a rapid fortune, but only on condition of singing or playing in a hall so large that no one can hear him properly, whilst his performance tends more and more to display and not to art, and so that he is worked like a crack race-horse and boomed like a quack pill. A famous tragedian is expected to run round the world exhibiting himself to audiences without a grain of training or judgment, who go to see him in the same spirit that they go to see a dwarf or a woolly horse. Monster concerts, leviathan programmes, one man on one instrument performing for four hours to an audience of ten thousand persons; a woman singing show pieces to thirty thousand people in an iron shed; professional puffery; the "star" playing with a company of walking dummies—are the inevitable result of the commercial system. It ruins the artist and degrades the art. In the course of thirty years I have watched how many of the finest artists in Europe have gone all to pieces after a tour round the world. Their methods before and after a successful tour are as much contrasted as the signatures of Guido Fawkes "before and after torture." Unhappily, it is not only they but their art which has gone to pieces. The profits and the business of the artist have been put upon such a footing that, if art is to pay at all, it has to submit to the manager's conditions; and these are necessarily such as are the ruin of high art.



In this dilemma our only resource is the rich man —the man who combines wealth, judgment, taste, and public spirit. He must put aside the bad and vulgar ways of the old-fashioned patron, who patronised for his own enjoyment or more usually from pride. There could not be a better model than the Athenian *choragus* of the best period, who was himself keenly ambitious of the prize of public honour, who looked upon himself as the business manager of the artist for the love of the art, and felt the same interest in his success as the squire took in the victory of the knight in the lists. It is not necessary to add that, of course, the legal obligation of the old republican Liturgy is not a thing to be revived in our age. If wealth is ever specially taxed in our times, it will be for all public purposes and not for incidental purposes of art. Until we recover the art passion which animated Athenians in their glorious times, we could hardly expect that a class-tax imposed by law would be popular. But there is all the more reason for voluntary discharge of these honourable duties.

There has hardly ever been an age when less is offered to the public in this form than is the custom in our own age. During the whole of antiquity the entire art education of the people and their amusements, spectacles, and luxuries, were provided for them freely by the wealthy. During the whole of the Mediæval period, vast resources were spent for the public benefit in the way of churches, religious offerings, ecclesiastical and academic endowments. The cathedrals, minsters, churches were the gifts of the rich, and were themselves free museums, galleries of art, musical halls, and even theatres. When the Mediæval world ended, much was done of the same kind, but in less noble and munificent ways, by the kings, princes, courtiers, and grandees. In our age the possessors of hereditary wealth are

mostly inclined to spend it on themselves and their personal friends. Conspicuous examples of public munificence are left to obscure workers whose noble public spirit too often raises something akin to a sneer from the toadies of the great.

At the end of my homily on "Liturgies" I am not about to enter at length on the question—Why should the rich make gifts to the public at all? This is a very wide and deep question which might carry us very far. It is enough for my present purpose to show that it has been recognised as a social, moral, and religious duty in all civilised times, and that it is still recognised in theory and from time to time practised in a way by many. The old republican conception of society was saturated with this principle as the antidote and compensation of glaring inequality amongst citizens. The Christian religion took it up as the corner-stone of its practice. The churches were incessantly repeating how God loveth a cheerful giver, and charged the rich that they be ready to give. Unhappily, this excellent advice took a very narrow and inadequate form, and has in our days been interpreted to mean a modest subscription to a church, hospital, or blanket club. And now, when the fervour of Christian charity is waning, and the zeal of giving half one's goods like Zaccheus is abated, there are very many rich men who never give at all, except what fashion dictates, and who entirely ignore the social obligation imposed on them by great wealth. Princes and grandees are more or less passing away as a social institution. The rich have succeeded to their powers; and they must remember that they have succeeded to their obligations.

My own creed, on which this is not the time or place to enlarge, teaches me that in our industrial age all wealth is really the product of thousands working



together in ways of which they are not conscious, and with complex and subtle relations that no analysis can apportion. The rich man is simply the man who has managed to put himself at the end of the long chain, or into the centre of an intricate convolution, and whom society and law suffer to retain the joint product conditionally; partly because it is impossible to apportion the just shares of the coöperators, and partly because it is the common interest that the product should be kept in a mass and freely used for the public good. But this personal appropriation of wealth is a social convention, and purely conditional on its proving to be convenient. The great problem which the twentieth century will have seriously to take in hand and finally solve is this:—Are rich men likely to prove of any real social use—or will it be better for society to abolish the institution? For my own part, I see many ways in which they can be of use, and I earnestly invite them to convince the public of this before it is too late.

P.S. 1908.—The fifteen years that have passed since this was written have given us, both in Britain and in America, many splendid examples of the spirit described in this essay. They are too conspicuous to need naming—but alas! as yet they are found only amongst the captains of industry—those who have personally created capital, not amongst those who have inherited great wealth.

II

THE REVIVAL OF THE DRAMA

(*From the "Forum," N.Y.*, 1893)

In that most fascinating of biographies—Moore's *Life and Letters of Lord Byron*—we read how the poet, then in the zenith of his powers, having exhausted every known sensation, was thrown into dangerous convulsions by witnessing Alfieri's *Mirra*, in company with his beloved Guiccioli. The attack was so severe that he felt the effects for a fortnight. He had a similar fit when some years earlier he saw Kean as Sir Giles Overreach. Byron, with all his faults, was not a nincompoop; he valued himself, and with good reason, on his personal nerve. There can be little doubt that the seizure was genuine and uncontrollable, and it remains a signal instance of the power of great acting over a poetic nature. This power has been felt in all ages with varying intensity, though perhaps it is rather at an ebb in our own. And that, in spite of the greatly revived interest we all now take in the stage, and the great amount of money, thought, and learning which is devoted to the theatre both in Britain and in America.

It is incontestable that our stage, as a whole, exhibits far higher standards of cultivation than did



that of our fathers in the 'Forties. Those who can remember the English theatre of that time may wonder how they ever could sit out in patience the historical play, the "genteel" comedy, and the second-class melodrama of that epoch. The farces were good —very good: there were in Europe one or two consummate actors: and there was still surviving an experienced body of old play-goers who had seen the grandest acting of modern times. But the *mise-en-scène*, the attempt at historic setting, the "supers" and chorus, walking-gentlemen, lords and ladies,— all these were too painful to look upon.

When we read the *Life of Dickens*, Macready's *Memoirs*, Charlotte Brontë's picture of Queen Vashti, or George H. Lewes' sensible little book on Acting, we get some sense of the relations of literature and the stage in the 'Forties, some idea of that tragic delirium which threw a great poet into convulsions in the generation preceding. But sixty years ago there were educated people outside Islington who told you that Phelps' Macbeth was grand, who believed firmly in Charles Kean's "revivals," in Gustavus Vasa Brooks' Richard III., and who never flinched under the cockney vulgarisms and the Tom-and-Jerry swagger of the "courtiers," the "Honourable Chawleses" and the Lord Verisophts, presenting what we were assured were the manners of high life. It makes one hot to remember what we could sit through in our raw youth. Certainly they do far better now.

In the first place, the local and historical setting of a high-class play is now often a thing to enjoy and even to study. The *Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, *Henry VIII.*, and a score of Mr. Irving's pieces, have been a true pleasure to witness, supposing them to be mere *tableaux* without words. The stage at the Lyceum is too crowded,—the sense of wanton costli-

ness in the costumes is unpleasant, and—and—but I will not finish the sentence—. Still, the general effect was that of a beautiful picture, regarded simply as a scene, and moreover of a true, consistent, and fairly accurate revival of a striking historic panorama.

This is, I believe, the main achievement of our generation in the improvement of the stage. Costumes, scenery, groupings, accessories, are real works of art—and in the main are true, thoughtful, even learned. Ours is the real age of historic reproduction. We may take it as certain that, in the history of the world, there never was a time when the exact picture of distant ages and races was reproduced with an illusion so complete. It is a very valuable mode of education, and might be carried much farther. Our revived Greek Plays can teach even scholars a good deal; and a historian might gain an idea from the *mise-en-scène* of *Becket*, even if we suppose the historian deaf, or otherwise unable to follow the Martyr's speeches. We live in an age especially great in the historic *mise-en-scène*, and we ought to be thankful.

It is not only the stage decorations, costumes, scenery, and historic realism which have greatly improved in the present generation. The rank and file, if they have not yet grown to be finished actors, no longer set our teeth on edge with excruciating vulgarisms and grotesque ignorance of the habits and speech of ladies and gentlemen. According to *Punch*, young men of birth and breeding are now flooding the stage, and an actor or two is indispensable at a Duchess' tea-party. Whatever be the cause, the manners of the stage are greatly improved, especially in light comedy, and the ordinary "society" play. The difference between a "genteel comedy" in 1843 and one in 1893 is the difference between the servants'



hall and the drawing-room. In farce they were then very good, and in melodrama sometimes effective enough. But in presenting the polite society of their own day, the utility men and women of fifty years ago spoke like valets and lady's maids, and had hardly any higher education outside their purely professional training.

We have changed all that. The company of a first-class English theatre have not yet reached that easy perfection of the Comédie Française—say in *Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, or in *La joie fait peur*; but tone of voice, look, bearing, are not outrageously unlike those of real society; and however much it falls short of fine acting, a modern comedy does not become an utter farce. Mr. Irving, Mr. Tree, Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Kendal, have accustomed us to see contemporary life presented on the stage of their theatres with a very fair approach to reality, and with perhaps little more of paint, "deportment," and false emphasis, than what is almost inseparable from footlights and boards—at least from English boards. [1893.]

There is another significant change—on the whole a change for the better. The melodrama of the old Surrey and the old Adelphi, the dramatised tales of the Harrison Ainsworth period, which Nicholas Nickleby presented to the provinces, were indescribable burlesques of passion, adventure, and crime, as traditionally understood on the minor stage. An actor of parts would occasionally strike out from them a lurid flash of horror and agony, and there was a certain rattle and ring about them, in spite of their gross extravagance. But as a whole they deserved the contempt to which our better taste and improved culture have consigned them. Their place has been taken by pure realism, the exact representation of familiar sights: a house on fire, a criminal court, a

sweater's den, a soldier's street row, or a picnic on the river. Why crowds should pay their money to see on the stage a policeman, a guardsman, a fire-engine, a race-horse, and a coster's jackass, which they can see in the streets any day without paying at all; why a city public should be delighted to see itself in a coloured photograph behaving just as it does outside, in the identical clothes, with identical animals, vehicles, and other properties, is a mystery. It is not art; it is not education; it is not fun. It is pure commonplace, and utterly dull. But it is harmless, and on the whole it is better than gross melodramatic rant.

It is easy then to sum up the features wherein the English stage of to-day has made distinct advance upon the stage of the 'Forties and the 'Fifties in the nineteenth century. First and foremost comes the artistic and intelligent setting of great historic plays; next, the rank and file at the best theatres can present modern life with some fair resemblance to what we see in the world, and not in a coarse stage convention; lastly, the melodramas of the second and third class have replaced intolerable burlesque by photographic realism, which, however pointless and ugly, is neither depraving nor absurd. These are distinct gains, but they are not gains of a very high order. They would hardly suffice to throw Byron into convulsions. Do they add appreciably to the incorporation of the higher theatre with the greater literature? Has our drama thereby become a substantive part, an essential, a beautiful part of our poetry and of our art? Does our modern stage feed, stimulate, and interpret the higher imagination in its best work? Is it a trivial amusement or a true civilising force?

The question is a very fair one, but by no means easy to answer. During the whole period of Attic



tragedy, during the whole period of Attic comedy, old, middle, and new, that is to say practically from the battle of Marathon to the Roman dominion, this was certainly true of the Greek theatre, that it was a civilising force. It was true of the age of Plautus, Terence, and even Seneca. It was true of the Passion-plays and Miracle-plays of the Middle Ages. It was true of the age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Dryden, and Congreve. It was true of Garrick and Goldsmith, of the age of the Kembles, of Sheridan, of Byron. It was obviously so in the age of the Spanish drama and also in the age of Louis XIV.; and it was so in the best age of the opera. It was so with Alfieri and with Göthe, Schiller, and Lessing. During almost every great epoch of literary creation, the tragic and the comic genius have found an instinctive affinity with the drama, have given to the drama of their best, and have found inspiration in the stage. Ours is an age, we are constantly reminded, of splendid genius. Does that genius give as much to the drama, find as much in the drama, as in so many various phases of civilisation it was wont to do?

Take our tragedies and great historical plays. They are certainly presented now with far greater knowledge, taste, and scenic art than perhaps at any former time. As *tableaux vivants*, the best of them are nearly perfect. [1893.] Shakespeare would at last come to believe himself to be a mighty poet (an idea which on earth never seems to have crossed his mind for an instant) if he could see Mr. Irving's Hamlet, Wolsey, Shylock, or Mary Anderson's *Winter's Tale*, or Mr. Benson's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Mr. Tree's *Merry Wives of Windsor* — provided his ears had been carefully plugged with cotton wool. To the eye the effect is perfect. But this is not enough. Is the *acting* of Shakespeare adequate to-day? To

those who have seen really great acting, to those who have carefully studied the traditions of the stage, and who have heard from competent judges what Kean, Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neill, and Kemble were, the question has but one answer. For sixty or seventy years at least, no really great tragedian has ever been heard in English. Those who saw Rachel at her best in Phèdre have known what great tragic acting can be; and we might add perhaps Got at his best, Salvini in his prime in Otello, Ristori at her best, in Rosmunda, and perhaps Sarah Bernhardt, at her best, in Andromaque. But it must be remembered that all of these have been seen very far from at their best, and especially on a foreign stage to an unsympathetic audience very imperfectly understanding their language. Let us take as a standard of measurement—Rachel, between 1840-1850, playing Phèdre at her best to a French audience. That was consummate tragic acting. For seventy years no English tragedian has ever approached that standard.

We all admire the thoughtfulness, the ingenuity, the varied accomplishments of Mr. Irving, of the late Mr. Booth, and of Mr. Tree and of others who are certainly actors of great merit; and Mary Anderson, Ellen Terry, Ada Rehan, Mrs. Langtry and the rest, are charming women, who at times touch a very sweet note. But when we come to measure our present tragic acting by a really high standard, we cannot count a single man of the first rank, nor a single woman of the second. The result is that our tragedies, even the best on the best stage, remain spectacles—things to look at, things to think over, and to learn from—but they never touch such chords of feeling as Mirra and Sir Giles Overreach roused in Byron, nor even wring a tear or a sob from the most impressionable woman. We come away with several



tips on archæology and some new readings from the "second folio"; and we say "What a lovely costume she wore to-night!"—"How wonderfully he makes up for Hamlet!"—but we are happily spared convulsions which make us ill for a fortnight. We have grown out of such nonsense; we go on to a late "crush," and talk about it as we do of the Private View of the New Gallery. That is to say, a tragedy with us to-day is a refined form of entertainment, but is no longer a living well-spring of poetic life.

Our average of culture in modern play and comedy is very much higher, the whole scenic business is far better, and the insufferable "staginess" of forty years ago is purged out of us. But it would be rash to assert that the leading parts of tragedy, comedy, or farce are really better acted now. Those who remember all that Macready and Charles Kean did to make Shakespeare popular, all that Wigan and Matthews did for comedy, all that Robson and Keeley did for farce, will hesitate to assert that we have superior actors to-day. Our companies are far more educated; we put everything on the stage with infinitely greater art; we have suppressed a mass of vulgarity and bombast. But the leading parts are not better filled than they were two generations ago. They still remain a whole class below the best contemporary acting of the continent; and they cannot be named with the best English acting of the early years of this century, nor even judged by the standard which experienced play-goers now living have been taught to recognise as great art.

All this is a very unpopular thing to say, and is sure to provoke even angry rejoinders. The heat of party politics is mild in comparison with the heat of affairs of taste. To disparage a man's favourite actor is an offence, we all know, worse than to doubt about his

wife's style of dress, or the absolute sanitation of his house-drain. Many men, especially of the younger generation and such as have had no opportunities of ever seeing the higher acting at all, cannot believe that what has given them so much pleasure can belong to any but the highest type. And most young men now and then become the loyal liegemen of some fascinating actress, whom, in the delightful *abandon* peculiar to their age and condition, they take to be the equal of the terrific Rachel or the irresistible Sarah. It is the duty of the older generation and of the larger experience to correct their pardonable extravagances and their generous illusions; to insist on the permanent standards of all noble art, and the far-reaching importance of maintaining that art in all its reaction over life.

The really important thing in the matter is the interaction of Literature, Art, and the Drama, using all three terms in their high sense as great civilising forces. Is the relation of poetry and the stage to-day all that it might be, all that in some ages it has been? Does the stage continue to add lasting works of real genius to our literature? Do our poets, our romancers, and thinkers work for the stage, draw from the stage? It was an event when the great poet of the Victorian age first, in his later period, produced an acting drama. He did so towards the close of his career, with some hesitation and distaste, and in just rivalry with the great poet of France. It cannot be said that his dramas hold any such place in his total work as do the dramas of Hugo in his work; nor are *Harold* and *Becket* at all destined to hold such a place in English literature, as *Hernani* and *Ruy Blas* hold in French literature. In spite of the beautiful setting in which we witness *Becket*, and its own interest as poetry, the true Tennysonian will always rate *In Memoriam*, the Lyrics, and the Songs,



as of vastly higher power. Tennyson wrote for the stage late in his career, doubtfully and without adding to his established reputation. And except Tennyson, we have hardly a single example of any writer of "the front bench" of our literature who has produced a single acting drama that now holds the stage or is ever likely to do so. Browning, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot, Swinburne, Lewis Morris, Buchanan and many others have written dialogues, lyrical dramas, and dramatic fantasias; but there is not one acting play among these pieces, nor has the stage of to-day ever coloured a line of them.

It is true that there are men of real ability who produce effective plays, and men of letters and of various powers who take a keen interest in the stage. But the vast bulk of our stage pieces are the work of playwrights rather than poets, and the severance of the purely literary and the theatrical world is very marked. It would be difficult to find any age or any country where the severance had been so complete. In France the majority of men of letters have tried their hand at a play or two; and the stage contributes an important part to the national literature.

What is the cause? The most immediate cause is this—that the English stage of to-day, though sufficiently cultivated to form an occasional entertainment, is not sufficiently alive to occupy the serious hours of men of "light and leading." Men of light and leading never find their imagination set on fire by any really great acting on an English stage; and it rarely occurs to them that the imagination can achieve some of its noblest work on the stage and by the instrument of the drama. The late Laureate gave them a clear and brave example; but he was so unfamiliar with the whole dramatic business, that his example failed to encourage his poetic and literary

compeers. Mr. Irving reminded him that the public loved its sensations rather vivid: and no one can doubt that Mr. Irving knew his public.

England is not, never was, and perhaps never can be, the home of the greatest acting. A Garrick, a Kean, may appear once in a century, just as a Shakespeare or a Göthe may. But Englishmen as compared with Frenchmen, Italians, even with Germans and Hungarians and Poles, are not born actors, and, except in farce, with difficulty rise to what in Europe is counted sound mediocrity. In farce and in burlesque, we have always been strong; but that is not a form of art which easily allies itself to the higher imagination. There are, moreover, special hindrances to great art, and these have been multiplied by railroads and all the mobility of recent habits. The capital is a nation in itself—and a nation which is always moving. The enormous extent of London makes it costly and troublesome to go to a theatre constantly. London again contains a vast floating population, which business and pleasure have drawn there for a few weeks or even days. This nomad body is as numerous as the whole population of a great city. It has abundant leisure in the evening, craves a little novelty and distraction, and is quite the reverse of critical. There is thus no permanent and trained audience in a London theatre. It is largely made up of casual elements from the provinces or the suburbs, who are not regular play-goers, who have a minimum of culture and are very easily pleased with a lively entertainment.

Now the essential conditions of a really great theatre are: first, a permanent and trained audience; next, freedom from pecuniary anxieties and any temptation to get big houses by sensations and spectacles; and lastly, a vigorous, independent, and



dominant school of criticism. The audience must come regularly and be perfectly familiar with each piece and each actor. A regular and highly trained audience will of course require a considerable *répertoire* and a constant change in the bill. It will insist on a wide range of contrasted pieces, and each actor appearing in new characters. This makes "runs" impossible. And a "run of a hundred nights" spells poor playing, for it means that the theatre is nightly filled with a succession of casual visitors, who can have no serious opinion of their own, and whose opinion, except that they pay their money, does not concern the actor or the manager. When a piece runs for a hundred or two hundred nights, it involves the shutting the doors of the house on all regular play-goers for 96 or 196 nights; for no rational lover of the drama can care to see the same piece more than three or four times within a few months, unless he go to the theatre to see his friends or exhibit his devotion to a particular "star." Unless the play-bill is continually varied, the audience must be a nomad and casual one. And a casual audience is *ex vi termini* ignorant, uncritical, easily satisfied, and unable to influence the players—for the bulk of them have come to see a gorgeous spectacle or to say they have seen a famous actor.

A theatre which has to depend on the daily reports from the till is under constant pressure of the most urgent kind to fill the house—*rem, quocunque modo, rem*, is the motto, *rem* meaning a big house. Now, we all know that a house may be filled by gorgeous costumes, real water, and a new use of the electric light. The higher class of managers have shown a really noble courage in resisting the temptation to degrade the theatre. But they must live. And they have to compromise: they begin with a beautiful and correct setting of their piece; it passes on into fine

clothes, costly properties, and the greasy "boom" business, so that the most high-principled manager finds that he will be ruined, unless his piece can run a hundred nights. If it does, he gets a low-class audience and shuts his doors on the really trained judges.

No company can be really trained unless they constantly play to a body of competent judges. And these must be guided by a school of criticism of a high intellectual order, having command of great literary organs. The company also, either by *esprit de corps*, the joint-stock system, or some internal organisation, needs to be as strictly disciplined as a good ship's crew, and should be as completely in the hands of a competent captain. This is how "the House of Molière" has flourished for two centuries; and every great theatre abroad or at home. The conditions of a great theatre are (1) a regular, trained, and judicial audience; (2) a pecuniary position independent of speculation or fortune-hunting, able to dispense with "runs" and "bumper" houses; (3) a company under absolute discipline playing before a school of criticism, of high culture, fearless independence, and paramount authority.

It will be said that these conditions, and perhaps any one of them, are impossible in England or in America. And perhaps they may be, in the absence of any assistance from the State, in the costliness of first-rate artistic power, and in the chaos of critical judgment. Under the present arrangements of society, the market price ruling everything we do, it must be allowed that a theatre organised on a high level is not to be dreamed of. But there is a conceivable plan on which (dream though it be) we might see a great theatre grow up and flourish. A great theatre would require a large trained body of actors, receiving regular and liberal salaries on a permanent engagement, with



a stake in the fortunes of the house and a voice in its management, but otherwise liberally maintained and under strict discipline. The pieces must be varied, and both parts and pieces continually interchanged. The appointments must be beautiful, complete, and correct. The director must have complete control, and yet have no temptation to fill his pockets or to exhibit his own genius. These conditions involve, it is obvious, a large deficit at the end of the year. Such a house would not be crowded with nomad bagmen and cockneys on the spree, but by a regular and trained body of critical play-goers. And such an audience would not be able to pay for a large company at high and permanent salaries, an artistic and learned *mise-en-scène*, and a play-bill varied two or three times a week. Who then is going to meet the deficit? For it is perfectly certain that, in England and America, the State will not contribute a cent.

I believe the day will come when public-spirited citizens will undertake this social duty on public grounds. There is no end to which wealth, taste, and munificence could more properly devote itself. Libraries, museums, institutes, parks, picture-galleries, and colleges, are continually being dedicated to the public by generous benefactors who desire to make a social use of some part of their fortune. Why does not one of these men found a theatre and endow it for a given period, or run a theatre on a grand scale out of his own purse? Such theatres as the Comédie Française could be run for ten or twenty years at least for the same capital sum as is often sunk in a college or a gallery of pictures. Of course the public would pay at the doors the current rates, and the founder would have to meet only the annual deficit, and he could always fill the theatre with gratuitous orders judiciously distributed. All great theatres that are

known to history were supported by the munificence of private citizens. The theatre at Athens was maintained during the whole of its glorious career by these means, which were known as "*liturgies*," or public services. So was the theatre and indeed all the spectacles at Rome, both under Republic and Empire. So was the theatre of the age of Louis XIV., so was that of Weimar in the age of Göthe. And out of the same system arose the opera and almost the whole of the music of modern Europe, whether for chamber or theatre. Our later age has determined to deal in drama just as it deals in pork—and we see the result in the system of "stars," spectacular pieces, and the advertising boom.

It must be surely some kind of antiquated religious prejudice which has hitherto diverted from the theatre the munificent stream of public benefactions which flow so freely for other forms of art. Why do we retain for this branch of art alone the rigid idea of money down and market value for the money? In ancient times the theatre was a public and even a religious festival, and the audience practically had gratuitous entrance. In a gallery of ancient masters, a museum of antiquities or a scientific institute, it is not thought essential to take money at the doors, nor is the value of the collection to be measured by the number who pass the turnstiles. The National Museums of Europe and America, to which citizens are free, contain on the whole more than is open to the paying public at the World's Fair. There is no absolute bond between excellence and price. Many a precious thing is free to all: many a costly thing is worthless to every one. And this is especially true of Art, where cost and value are not seldom in inverse ratio to each other. A great theatre must be a theatre on an intellectual, moral, and social level with a great



collection of art treasures. It can never be maintained by the money taken at the doors, till the culture and habits of our people are entirely transformed. And the only way in which it can be maintained is by the munificence of some citizen of great wealth, high culture, and ardent public spirit.

P.S. 1908.—How different a song we all sing to-day! But such was our ill-humour in the ancient days of the pre-Shavian, pre-Arthurian, pre-Pinerotic era.

III

DECADENCE IN MODERN ART

(*From the "Forum," N.Y.*, 1893)

THERE is no feature in our present age of which we are more proud than our revived interest in Art, our renewed success in Art; and we are wont to look back on our grandfathers as having lived in the dark ages of taste. There is solid ground for this pride; our knowledge, our judgment, our instinct for Art have shown for more than a generation a great development. Our zeal for new forms of art is conspicuous. But, with an irrepressible thirst to be original at any cost, there is a tendency at work of a thoroughly debased kind. Of the dangers of this I would say a few words.

Reaction against the conventional, the melodramatic and the "sweetly pretty," is wholesome and natural; and it is much to have secured a general revolt against these besetting vices of an artificial age. But revolt and iconoclasm are only the beginning of reformation; and in Art especially the more violent forms of protest are full of harm. It boots little to be rid of the conventional in order to set up an idol in the brutal, the coarse, the odd, the accidental, and dull imitation of rank commonplace. Yet this is a growing creed



amongst the motley crowds of those who imagine themselves to be pursuing Art in many forms and under very different inspiration.

In literature, in the drama, in painting, in sculpture, even in architecture and in music, we are now bidden to admire what is simply novel; and the test of true genius is discovered to be the disgusting or the eccentric. In the vast field of literature, which is so infinitely more subtle and complex than any other form of art, it is true that, under strict reserve, and in a master's hand, there is room for idiosyncrasies and for horrors. In fiction, and to some degree in poetry, a powerful imagination may deal with the grotesque and the repulsive. Their suggestions are far less concrete and definite than those of the arts of form. But painting, with its sharp, vivid, imitative limits, cannot safely venture on these gross reproductions of the brutal and the vulgar. When painting does this, it is degenerating into literary instead of artistic resources. And it is a proof of decadence and aimless vacuity when the painter endeavours to goad us into interest by the same appeal to our sense of disgust with which the novelist has long exhausted our patience.

At the root of his tendency lie mere conceit, a craving for notice, and ignorance of the methods, limits, and conditions of Art. A raw lad who, except that he can twirl about a brush, has as little intellectual training as an errand-boy, solemnly warns us—"That is what *I* see!"—"That is what *I* like!"—"This and That are what *I* know!" But what if the visions of this youth, his likes and his dislikes—even what he calls his "joys" and his "passions"—are wholly without interest or value to any rational and cultivated man? What, if the queer things he may have learned in some obscure hole, are tedious, it may be nauseous, to thinking people who want no such experience?

A man may go down into a sewer, or a dissecting-room, or a coal-pit, and may there see things which are not familiar to the public and which it would disgust the public to see. Accordingly he paints these things in an odd matter-of-fact way, as protests against the conventional and the sugary in Art, and he calls on us to admire a really original masterpiece. Michael Angelo and Rembrandt may occasionally touch such a subject, which their genius could clothe with a wild poetry. But a common pot-boiler, which can clothe them only in very squalid prose, is mere impertinence.

One rarely sees an exhibition of pictures now, especially in France, without plenty of literal transcripts from hospitals, police cells, and dens of infamy. A powerful imagination might find art even there. But the aim of these modern "artists" is not art—but disgust. They give us merely coloured photographs, without grace, pathos, awe, life, or invention. Their purpose is to be as ugly, as crude, as photographic, as unpleasant as canvas and dull paint can make it. It is not even grim; it is not sensational; it is not a *tour de force*. Everything is flat, angular, prosaic, nasty. Few persons have witnessed the operation of ovariotomy, or a lesson in anatomy, or a drunken orgy in a night-house. To give a literal rendering of one of such scenes ministers in some to a prurient curiosity. And the artist has his reward in the grinning groups around his work. But it is no more art than is the report of a filthy trial, or the descriptions in a manual of surgery.

Another favourite device, again in France especially, is the serving up to the general public those nasty oddities which are inevitable in the studio, the dressing-rooms of a theatre, or a booth at a country fair, or any other place where habit and toil have expelled modesty and refinement. "The model scratching her back,"



"The model has sat down on a wet palette," "The acrobat enjoying a jug of beer,"—such are good titles in the catalogue to arouse a jaded interest. Any stupid horse-play which causes a grin in a studio or a circus will equally serve the turn. It is novel to the public; and to paint it with a dull photographic realism will give the spectator a puzzle to work out. Crowds will say—"What on earth is that?" They never saw anything like it; and so it will supply them with new information and experience.

Some hold that Art means utter dulness and strict elimination of every source of interest. A dirty old woman vacantly staring at a heap of stones, a pig wallowing in fetid mud, a dusty high road between two blank walls, a sand-bank under a leaden sky—such are the chosen spectacles dear to rising genius. It is impossible to find in them a trace of beauty, poetry, pathos, incident, or grace. When these are presented with a monotonous realism in a uniform tone of drab or mud, we are triumphantly told that conventionalism is routed and Truth in art is enthroned. There are now to be seen pictures on Exhibition walls wherein nothing whatever can be detected but a sickly blur in a haze of grey monochrome. It is true that sensationalism and conventionalism are at last got rid of. But so they would be, if the artist had left his canvas blank, or had put his palette in a gold frame and named it "Day-dreams," or a "Fugue in primitive colours."

Others again, in pursuit of the novel and the real, will laboriously discover some trick in nature, some unfamiliar and quite accidental collocation of objects, some artificial reflection, some conundrum in colour, and they very conscientiously paint the queer subject. "Do you think it unnatural? Ah! then you never saw a green frog crawling over a bare bosom in a flash

of lightning. If you had, you would have seen just that!" It may be; but we don't want to perpetuate such unusual incidents, even if we ever saw them. And if the scene was really like that, it must have been anything but pleasant. "Who ever saw a woman with green flesh and blue hair?"—"Yes! but you never saw the reflex colours of a tropical jungle in a thunderstorm!" We certainly never did. But when we go to picture-galleries we like to see pictures, pictures that are intelligible without a catalogue or a lecture on optics; and we do not care to see kaleidoscopic juggleries in mysterious frames.

Ah! the frames! Raphael and Titian nowadays have gone into partnership with their frame-makers, and they share the glory in equal halves. Your painter to-day is as fantastic in his frames as some would-be women of fashion in the device of their note-paper. Every trick that was ever tried to amuse children in a Christmas card now figures in a picture Exhibition; and works of art are advertised in their fancy wrapper like pills and soap. Of course the school of the "bleeding Coster" has his slang frame. The sides of a packing-case, some long boots, an unbarked rail, the boughs of a tree, or a leathern apron —any one of these makes a new and effective frame with downright realism and nothing conventional at all. They call attention to the work of art inside, if they do not monopolise attention; they show an aspiring genius and a freedom from cant. There is one form of frame which I have not yet seen tried, the idea of which I propose to patent in Paris, London, New York, and Chicago. It is an apparatus by which the frame contains a mechanical whistle or "hooter," set to give voice every three minutes or oftener if required. The fortunate artist who first obtained this whistling frame would force the spectators in



the gallery to turn to his canvas. That would give him what he seems to regard as the main end of his art.

We need say nothing about the delirious affectation of "Sâr Péladan" and the "Independent Artists" and of other *petits maîtres* who attitudinise in various galleries. The "hooting" frame would answer their purpose far better. But, as an indication of the "winds of doctrine" now crossing the art-world, they should be observed. Things must be out of joint when, not one, but fifty "artists" can cover the walls of public exhibitions with mere practical jokes. One of them paints his picture—say a young woman beside a river in a meadow near a wood—and over the whole finished piece he daubs on purple blotches about two inches long and a third of an inch wide. These streaks, like woolly caterpillars on a leaf, go right across girl, river, meadow, sky, and wood—"over all," as the heralds say. The effect is supposed to be that the picture is worked in Berlin wool. Beside it, a naked hermaphrodite stands on the top of a deep water without sinking through the surface, gazing at the sun with a rapt expression. These things are "an allegory": this is modern symbolism. Before another "symbolic" work of modern genius lately stood a group of experienced artists, disputing as to what was the visible subject of the picture. One thought it was a battle-piece; another insisted it was shell-fish in a tank; others took it for a Last Judgment; and one was positive it was ripe fruit.

Unfortunately, this pursuit of the grotesque is not confined to buffoons. Men of real power, men of undeniable influence, are making systematic efforts to establish in Art the reign of ugliness, brutality, dulness. Whatever is loathsome, whatever is eccentric, whatever is common,—this, we are assured, is the

native home of Art. It is a creed practised and taught by some who really can draw and paint; and it is justified by a school of critics coarse of tongue and quarrelsome in temper. "Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat," as Dr. Johnson put it. And the apostle of the foul in Art is certainly not nice in his language or courteous in his manners. We can afford to pass by with a smile the mere mountebanks and their literary puffers. But we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that men of true gift and trained skill are dragging down their Art into the mire; and it is time to weigh their claims and their theories. For it concerns much more than Art. Like every other claim to degrade human life, it has a moral and a social side which concerns us all.

Reduced to its elements, their theory is this:—

"Art means the representation of Nature. Whatever is found in Nature is the subject of Art. The test of Art is Success in representation: nothing else at all. The business of the artist is to show how cleverly he can use his brush. It matters not what he paints, if it enables him to display dexterity. You, the spectator, must not think about the painting—the one thing to be thought of is the painter. You may not like the result of his work: you may find it as a picture, tedious, revolting, grotesque. So much the worse for you. The painter *sees* that; the painter *enjoys* that dull or foul sense; the painter *once saw* that queer combination. It is no business of yours that it does not interest you. Your business is to see how very cleverly he has put on to canvas this filth or this dullness. If you cannot see it, you are a rank Philistine, and had better buy oleographs evermore. Art has been ruined by its silly straining after the beautiful, the ideal, the charming, and the ennobling. There is in Nature quite as much that is coarse, dull,



odd, and foul—perhaps much more—and it is far more obvious and intelligible. Art henceforth means the realism of the seamy side of Nature and Man. We have been surfeited by the pursuit of grace, beauty, and dignity, which have led Art into a world of sickly conventions. We are now in for naturalism in its real, crude, naked shape. If *technique* is right, all is right. The one test of Art is—*du Chic, du Chic, encore du Chic!*"

These are the Ten Commandments of the Ugly School. And we may say at once that Art has never before been endangered by a creed at once so false and so base. It is the product of conceit in the artist, stimulated by the demoralising system of public Exhibitions filled by competition, in an age when social principles are being cast pell-mell into the melting-pot. What matters to us the cleverness of the artist, as such? We want something to be a joy forever; we have no interest in the smartness of somebody advertising his wares. If his "cleverness" is thrust on our attention, it is a nuisance; if we perceive his advertising tricks, it is an offence. If a painter in effect says to us—"Never mind my picture, look at my brush-work!"—it is an outrage. We could not endure the Cartoons, if every robe were inscribed "*Raphael fecit*" in letters a foot in height. The painter who aims at displaying how astonishingly smart he can be, is not a painter, but an acrobat. A tragedian might perform Hamlet standing on his head instead of his feet, but we should not call him a great actor. We come to see a drama and not a performer's tricks. The less we see of the painter, the less we notice his method, and the more we feel the work as work of art, and the more we enjoy it for itself and not for its producer—the nearer do we get to true Art.

It is mere impertinence for a man, of whose culture and attainments we have no guarantee at all, to come forward and tell us that he *loves* a murky sky, a sandy waste, or a drunken tramp; that *he sees* Nature through a green or purple lens; that he is quite *at home* in squalid dens and dingy byways—that we must take *his* likes and dislikes, and put our own away. Yes! if he can throw poetry and power into the common, if he be Israels or Millet, Méryon or Decamps. We care for the least sign of interest in anything from Michael Angelo and Rembrandt, because we have certain evidence that they had a creative brain and a profound spirit. But in the absence of any such evidence, why need we adopt the likings of the first man who has picked up a trick of the brush? For aught we know, his eyesight may have been distorted, and his soul turned sour in the dregs of some Parisian "*Trois Rats*," where all that he ever knew of life was drawn. If such an one, without poetry, pathos, or imagination, presents to us a crude, dull, photographic copy of something gross, something wearisome, such as we should turn from with loathing in real life, how is the offence mended by the artist's assurance that he loves it himself, and by his friends' assurances that he is a very *diable du chic* with his brush?

Real genius gives us a great deal more than the *Chic*, the craft of the brush; and, however wonderful be its brush-work, that is always the least part of the whole, that of which we think least, and notice last. To real genius all things are open, and if it choose to rest for a space on what is common or gross, genius speaks to us from out it in tones that go down to our hearts. But the painter touches the gross and the common at his peril. If he has nothing to tell us save that it is common and gross, it avails him little to add



that he is himself immensely clever. If he be, let him give us what we can enjoy. To serve up what he enjoys himself, he might as well ask us to see him enjoy a brandy cock-tail or a dish of tripe. We have no taste for tripe, or for cock-tails—nor indeed for him. Of course he can only paint what he sees; he must tell us what he knows; and show us what he has observed. But a previous question arises—Is he wanted at all? There are very many clever people in the world; and unfortunately, many of them are a mere incumbrance and nuisance on this earth. In this æsthetic age, when millions of men and women are dying to have a taste, a clever artist of any kind (be he only a good-looking youth who has taken to the stage), can very soon gather an admiring *claque*. But the real question is, whether mere technical cleverness, without genius or learning, has any *locus standi* in an age of high culture.

All visible things may be painted, and the accomplished artist should be able to paint anything paintable. It is no doubt an excellent training for him to paint anything he sees, exactly as he sees it, however flat, however ugly. But this is merely his exercise, his studio practice, his "training" work. We no more want to see these exercises exhibited, than we want to see the dancer and the acrobat at home training their muscles, or the musician practising scales. The bulk of what our modern naturalists exhibit as works of art are nothing but the crude exercises of a learner. To the student the bare and gritty fact is indispensable. No one can ever be an artist who has not completely mastered it. But it is only the A B C of art, as are scales to a musician, and somersaults to an acrobat. Art only begins, when he who can present facts perfectly comes to see how facts may be presented with feeling and imagination.

It is quite true that we have long had to put up with sentimental feeling and theatrical imagination, and no terms need be kept with these sickly abortions. But to stamp out feeling and imagination altogether is an error just as gross. And in order to sterilise feeling and imagination, the ambition of "modernity" too often seems to be, to lavish conspicuous agility of brush on the vulgarest bit of fact which Earth or Man can present. That is—*le vrai Chic.*

Let us never hold parley with this Gospel of grossness and conceit. Art does not exist that its professors may show their skill with their tools, any more than Literature exists only to show how men of letters can handle a pen, any more than Religion exists only to show how eloquently preachers can discourse about Heaven. We do not suffer a musician to startle his audience with brilliant fingering, and to tell them that it is no business of theirs whether the music he plays be pleasing or commonplace. Nor would we listen to the actor who told us to admire his elocution or his make-up, and that it was all one, if the words of the play were by Shakespeare or by Cibber. Yet there is growing up a new order of painter whose device is —"I am the blessed Glendoveer: 'tis mine to paint, and yours to gaze." "Modernity" is a fine thing, and new efforts are very much to be encouraged. But even in this age of perpetual change, there are a few stable canons of philosophy and human nature left untouched; and if they do not enter into the curriculum of education in the Life Schools of London and Paris, they have not been entirely dethroned. And the central of these canons is this, that the business of Art is to increase the beauty and the happiness of human life.

Society in self-defence must put its foot down on the degrading affectation of those who love to



accentuate all that is ugly and dreary in Nature and in Man. It is an easier trade than adding to the sum of beauty and happiness. And it is unquestionably a newer trade. Their squalid paradox would never have been heard of, save in an epoch of incessant change and of chaos in opinion. We live in a world which is growing quite delirious for something new, when any revolt is hailed as a new dispensation. A man has only to shout out loud enough the new Gospel—say, "Murder a fine art," "The true beauty of dirt," or "Ugliness as a joy forever,"—and he straightway gathers round him a sympathetic group. The system of Art Exhibitions, unknown and impossible in any great age of Art, with its competition and its advertising tricks, is continually feeding the vanity, the jealousy, the cupidity of the artist. Nowhere is "the struggle for life" more acute. It begets such a spirit as reigns over Monte Carlo and Wall Street. In the frantic thirst to win, any paradox must be tried, any degradation accepted. Where at most a hundred men in all are so born as to be worthy of devoting their lives to Art, ten thousand are struggling to get heard of, and to have their canvases bought. Our very enthusiasm to get a New Art, we know not whence or how, is so ill-directed that it threatens to make any good Art impossible.

Direction!—there perhaps lies the root of the matter, and the source of our danger. The essential claim of "modernity" is to assert the absolute independence of Art, and to defy any sort of condition of limit, whether of tradition, philosophy, morality, or even good sense. The artist, they tell us, is an angelic being who is a law unto himself, and the world has merely to gaze at his gambols, and to enjoy his enjoyments, as we do with some rare and diverting beast at a show. No claim can be more preposterous.

There is no better ground that Art should be independent of all other human activity, or be more of a law unto itself, than that literature, or industry, or politics should be. Rational civilisation implies that all forms of social life should equally conform to human experience, should work on some recognised principles, should visibly conduce to moral and social progress.

The ancient world of Art was inspired by its beautiful and inexhaustible mythology. The mediæval world of Art was inspired by its sublime and pathetic hagiology. The Renascence was inspired by that rich and joyous Humanism, such as we find in Michael Angelo and Ariosto, in Spencer and in Shakespeare. There never was, and there never will be, any epoch of great Art which had not its own religious, social, or national enthusiasm, its recognised ideals of beauty and happiness, its sense that the duty of Art was to minister to a nobler life. It will be an evil day, when Art comes to mean individual caprice, and the artist means a clever tradesman scheming to get business—when the ideal of Beauty is displaced by feats of manual dexterity.

It is true that we have got rid of any pretension whether of Theology, Church, custom, or convention, to keep Art in leading-strings and to crush it by Egyptian or Byzantine formulas. There is no danger of returning to such barbarous slavery of a superstitious age. But to rush to the extreme of handing over Art to individual caprice and intellectual chaos is a very different thing. And to what individual caprices are we asked to submit? To the crude experiments of men, the great majority of whom have never shown a sign of intellectual culture or inspiring ideas, and whose highest ambition is to get their "values" right. Certainly the "values "must be right, if anything is to



be done at all, just as the notes must not be flat if we are to play or sing to any purpose. But "values," and notes in tune, are but the A B C of the art; and when they are got right, everything still remains to be done. *The business of Art is to increase the beauty and the happiness of human life.* And until the craftsman is duly abreast of all that is known, felt, and thought by the most competent minds and the purest spirits of his time—till then, he remains a craftsman and cannot be enrolled in the noble army of artists.

The old religious ideals, the old poetic ideals, the old social ideals are certainly passing away, and we are all waiting till the new ideals are fully formed, and ampler canons of life and beauty are revealed. But these are not to be reached by ingenious experiments with a palette, or by the random fancies of men who have neither wide grasp of life nor serious intellectual culture. Our painters need an education far larger than that of third-rate poetry and comic literature. And in the meantime desperate efforts to do something original by men who have no single qualification to make them intellectual leaders, are certain to lead us still farther astray. It is but too obvious that nearly all that which served to inspire great art in past times is now worn out. But to preach to us that Art needs no inspiration, no ideals, no guidance, no thought, no beauty, no self-control—that its sole task is to put on canvas whatever is to be seen,—this is the broad road that leadeth to destruction.

Let me not be taken to be a partisan of the old academic conventionality, with its sickly round of Dresden-china puppets and its inane assortment of stage properties. I am defending no particular school, as I am censuring no particular person. We have amongst us painters who, if their results fall short of their aim, have a fine imagination, a true sense of

beauty, and a high conception of the dignity and the conditions of their art. We have such men, and let us be thankful for them. And, if they are but a few in the midst of a crowd still given over to conventional routine and trivial interests, it is simply that we are living in an age which is not yet great in the arts of form. On the other hand, I have been condemning no single person and no single group or school. There are several groups now working in many countries who are trying most different methods, and preaching most different doctrines. They are mostly to be noticed in France, which is now the recognised *nidus* where all new ideas in art are fermenting. In many of these efforts after a new type I recognise some of the most hopeful signs of our time. Especially is that true of those poetic efforts to combine fact, beauty, pathos, and reality in the aspect of common things and lowly lives—which may be said to culminate in the *Angelus*. Here is the true path. But amongst these new groups, raging to be "original," both here and in France, there are some to whom beauty—nobleness of aspect or of feeling—even decency—are a mockery and an offence; some whose ideal it is to be dull, or to be eccentric, or to be brutal. For such there is no hope in this world or the next.



IV

ART AND SHODDY

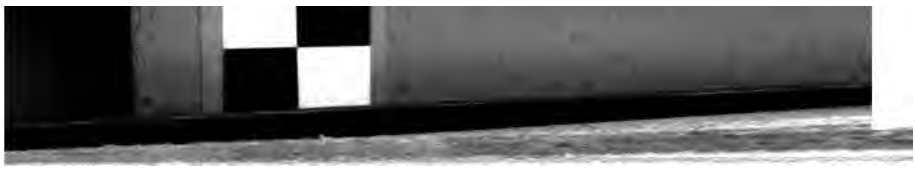
(*From the "Forum," N.Y.*, 1893)

SURPRISE has been expressed by some on both sides of the Atlantic, that one who is so often called an optimist, and who certainly looks forward with enthusiastic hope to a great development of every form of human life, should have spoken of a certain decadence as visible to-day in our poetry, our romance, our art. It is true that I have been showing examples of a certain slackness in creative force, sundry morbid tendencies, an obvious state of chaos, and some false prophets in our midst; and those whose business in the great Fair is chiefly to beat gongs and to shout to the crowd, have been calling out, "Here is a wicked pessimist, here is a cynic:—hurry up you poets, novelists, and painters, and fall upon this sour old fellow, who tells you that you are played out, and have got to take a back seat!" And more to the same effect in the peculiar language of their very popular art.

With all the convictions which I hold forcing on me great hopes in the ultimate future, any sense of disappointment I may feel in the present is only a passing mood, and relates to special causes at work for

a time. We live, it is plain, in an age of transition; we are trying new lines of activity; and are making some crucial experiments. We are rapidly casting off traditions and beliefs, and are eagerly searching about for new beliefs, new canons—which it is but too obvious that we have not found, or at least that we cannot agree that we have found. Many cry, Lo here, Lo there! many shout, *Eureka*; but the world smiles and shakes its head, and waits. I have tried to point out that we must wait a little longer, and that many an *Eureka* is decidedly premature. And I will now indicate some of the adverse causes which retard us, and why we have need of caution and patience in our forecast. With an unshaken confidence in the resources of human nature, whatever I see to dishearten us has reference to none but temporary causes.

Again, some of those to whom I fear I am known but in a very distant and casual way, have wondered that I should take any interest in poetry, romance, or art; and how one whose main business for thirty years past has lain with the doctrines of Auguste Comte, should now be presuming to talk about verses and novels and painting. So far as Comte is concerned, nothing is more striking than the vast importance which he assigns to imaginative power, so that in his *Library* of chosen books he gives one-fifth to poetry, romance, and art, and in his *Calendar* of chosen heroes he has given to these nearly one-fourth of the whole. High, broad, and pure Art, in all its various modes whether of words, of form, or of sounds, is bound up with the nobility of human life. Decadence in art is a sure sign of some organic change taking place in our moral sense. Healthy art is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual growth. And men who would smile to be told that our age is too eager after wealth, too prone to worship public success, and greedy after



coarse forms of luxury, are moved when they see these moral disorders poisoning the very arts of daily life.

There are very plain tendencies of a general kind which are not favourable to the higher forms of imaginative work. If there is one thing which is more than another peculiar to our own age, it is that it is an age of specialism. In science, in sociology, as in practical things, the most curious subdivision of employment has become the rule. Histories of a single country over a few years fill many volumes, and occupy exactly the same time in composition as the events occupied in transaction. A great reputation in natural history is achieved by a life-long study of one species of *coleoptera*. He is a very learned man who knows even the literature of a single nation and of any moderate number of centuries. A painter spends a long and laborious life in reproducing one class of scene or subject. I will not say that specialism is otherwise than essential, nor am I prepared to deny that it is the strength of our knowledge. But it is most antipathetic to Art. Art is eminently synthetic. It combines, transfigures, and crystallises everything it touches. Art means unity of conception; and specialism means disparate and dispersive observation.

It is vain then to look for any very great art, either in literature or in the special arts of form, under the reign of universal Specialism. Music and poetry are not so closely dependent on the visible present. But prose romance, the drama, painting, sculpture, architecture, even acting and dress, cannot free themselves from the environment of dry and precise rule, of minute subdivision of opinion and knowledge. Omniscient criticism, fastidious taste, microscopic learning, surround them with the cold curious stare of British dowagers in a drawing-room.

Giotto, Leonardo, Michael Angelo, Holbein, Raffaelle, were architects, sculptors, or decorators, as well as painters: Velazquez, Rubens, Rembrandt, were men of splendid culture and spacious life, who could clothe every aspect of the visible world with a deep glow of meaning and beauty. An "artist," in the *cinque-cento*, meant one who saw human life in a higher light than common men, and who could teach men the dignity of their own existence. If Raffaelle to-morrow were to paint a new "School of Athens" a hundred critics would tell him that his archæology was all wrong, and his Greek hardly up to pass in the "Little-Go." And as to the historic pictures of Veronese and Rubens, every schoolboy would be laughing at some anachronism, and would write to the *Times* to show that the Romans knew nothing of *cheiton* and *chlamys*, nor did Greeks ever wear *paludamentum* and *caligæ*.

We know so much about the history of architecture that we build an Imperial Institute or a World's Fair with many different "styles" pieced together, like a patchwork quilt, as if they were geologic specimens in a glass case. Our historic tragedies are wonderful lessons in the comparative History of Costume; and Mr. Irving, if not always audible as an elocutionist, is usually faultless as an antiquarian. One cannot have everything at once. Vast and exact learning, critical purism, and dispersive studies are fatal to the forked lightning flash of great art. We have still men nobly struggling to give some unity to art—Sir Frederick Leighton, William Morris, G. F. Watts, Whistler, and others who do something more than turn out replicas of a bit of blue sea or a favourite cow. We shall no doubt again have an age when Synthesis will weigh more than Analysis, and Conception of the Whole more than Observation of the Parts. We shall have again an age of coherent ideas:—and when



we have that, we shall have another age of Great Art (1893)

Democracy, again, is a blessed word, the peculiar boast of our age on both sides of the Atlantic, as certain to grow as anything else on this earth. I am assuredly not one who sees with alarm the ever-growing influence of the masses and their increased share of the world's products. Far otherwise: for to me civilisation means nothing else than the opening to the whole mass of the people the culture, the power, the welfare which are now not so particularly well used by the fortunate few. But it must be admitted that this distant Utopia has not yet been reached, and that the stage of transition has its own defects. It is but too painfully obvious that the great public has not yet acquired a mature and refined taste in matters of grace and beauty, and has but scant leisure to enjoy that ideal in the actual which we call Art. The old feudal organisation of society with a wealthy and leisured class at the top, amidst all its social and economic evils, did conduce to a certain standard of culture and a practical pursuit after beautiful things. It was very far from being the best or purest mode of stimulating the productions of genius. But it did much in various ages of the past to promote art; and it cannot be said that Democracy has yet been able to fill its part with entire success.

Nor is it Democracy of the age of Pericles or of the Italian Republics in the Middle Ages, but a Democracy combined with an ever-grinding industrialism, that wrings the last ounce from the labour of millions, while it suddenly heaps up vast wealth in the hands of the ignorant and the mean. How can the imagination flourish in such a world? It is wonderful that poetry has done so much:—but the poet, as I

have said throughout, like the musician, lives more in a dream-world of his own, which is impossible in the arts of form. The architect, the painter, the sculptor, the designer, the decorator in every kind, has to work in a grim world, where the journeyman has small interest or enjoyment, except in earning his day's wage, where beauty and grace are treated as cruel hindrances to the rapid accumulation of fortune; and where boundless wealth is often placed in the absolute control of men who find little delight in it except as it ministers to caprice and ostentation. Pharaoh tells the children of Israel that they are idle, and shall have no straw, and yet shall deliver their tale of bricks. Genius must be free: Art must have a light heart. To deliver a tale of bricks to taskmasters revolts its inmost soul, and is ever beyond its force.

This indeed is the real root of the mischief—that Art in all its forms is become a mere article of commerce. We buy works of imagination, like plate or jewelry, at so much the ounce or the carat; and we expect the creator of such works to make his fortune like the "creator" of ball costumes, or of a dinner service. We have got rather into what logicians call "a vicious circle"—the buyers crying out, "Give us a really great work of art, and we will pay whatever you ask!"—the artist replying, "Guarantee us a handsome income for life, and in good time we will give you an immortal work!" Neither of these proposals is accepted, nor can they be accepted. The artist has to boil his pot, and now-a-days he likes his potage to be as savoury and costly as that of his neighbours, and he has not the leisure or the wealth to meditate for years on a truly immortal work. On the other hand, the buyer, who is usually a keen business man, not unnaturally says, "I must have value for my money, and to keep an artist in



luxury, whilst he is meditating a big thing, is not my idea of business!"

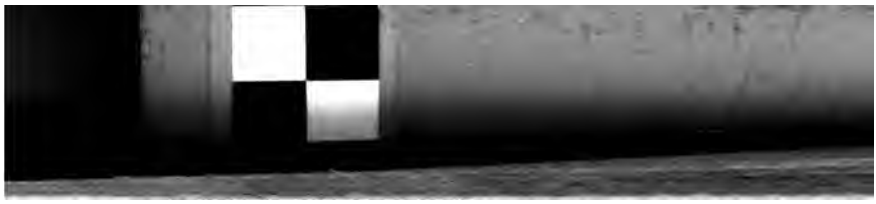
All buying and selling involves in some form or other a market. And hence the curious institution of periodical Art Exhibitions. I do not hesitate to put down very much in our deficiency in art-sense to this demoralising habit. When the practice began, and it did not begin until all the great traditions in art were exhausted and all the great artists had become Old Masters, when the practice was fresh, and its uses seemed obvious, there was *a priori* much to be hoped from it. Aspiring genius was to place its productions side by side for comparison; men of taste and wide experience were to be the judges; the great public was to be educated; and buyers and sellers were to meet in open mart. How different the actual result! It was not genius, so much as industry, knack, and smartness, that covered the Exhibition walls. The "works of art" were crammed together like herrings in a barrel, and their diversity of tone and subject produced the same impression of discord on the eye as the ear would feel if a thousand instruments in one big orchestra were all set to perform a different tune. The violin trilled out a sonata, the flute played a jig, the cornet rang out Yankee Doodle, and the drum boomed forth the "Dead March" in Saul.

The judges too began to wrangle; they called each other bad names, and devoted the works of art they disliked to the hangman, or declared that their own friends were far greater than Raffaelle and Michael Angelo. There were cliques, sets, favouritism, murmurs of jobbery, and violent recrimination. The great public, puzzled by the diversities of the critics, unfortunately took to develop its own taste unaided; and it consolidated its opinion into a love for commonplace, for the vulgar, the silly, the conventional.

The middleman, alas! soon stepped in, as he always does, when money is to be made, and he soon became the absolute "boss" of the whole show. Artists did not sell their works to amateurs and collectors—but to the enterprising middleman, to whom they were years in debt. Collectors did not buy works from the artist—but from the middleman, who had bought up in the studio half-finished pieces at half rates; who practically dictated to the artist what he should paint, and how; who dictated to the collector what he ought to buy and for how much; and who practically educated the public as to what it liked or disliked. And Art became as much a matter of professional dealing as a corner in pork, or a Bear operation in Erie bonds.

The unlucky expedient of competitive Exhibitions has had many indirect ways of pulling down both artist and public. In a crowd of indiscriminate works it was essential to secure attention from the jaded visitor who had in his weary hand a catalogue of some four thousand works. To secure attention the obvious course had been shown with marked success by the vendors of rival soaps and pills. Flesh and blood, a starving family, and the laudable desire to have the outward marks of successful industry, did the rest. The dealer fixed the ruling fashion and an elaborate schedule of prices, much as he does in brocades and carpets. The great bulk of artists, painters, sculptors, architects, designers,—yes! let us add poets, dramatists, novelists, essayists, and journalists—submitted to the inevitable; and Genius, which in the heyday of generous youth had dreamed that it would live only to paint, to carve, to write, fell back into the ignoble crowd which paints, carves, and writes only to live.

The camel of Holy Writ will have passed through the eye of the needle long before Supply and Demand



will ever have succeeded in creating a great art. And men will be gathering grapes of thorns and figs of thistles the day that Art Exhibitions promote immortal works. For consider how completely every noble work that we know has its own peculiar setting of place, time, person, and inspiration. Take that type of great art, the Parthenon at Athens. Every statue, metope, and bit of frieze had its place in the glorious whole, and would be vapid or unintelligible out of it. The State chose, employed, and paid the artist, and the chief of the State hung over his work with love and pride, as if the artist were the best of his own colleagues. The whole was to the honour of the great Patron Deity of the State, and the completion of it was a sort of National Sacrament and Thanksgiving Day.

That was the most perfect and typical work of art that this earth ever saw. What would it have been if "Theseus," and "Ilissus," "Centaurs and Lapithæ," had been stuck in galleries in the midst of Busts of a prominent citizen, dancing-girls, children at play, and the like, numbered 4576 in the Official Catalogue, "the work of Pheidias, the studios, Acropolis, price to be had of the secretary; if in Parian marble 25 per cent extra"? The "Theseus" and "Ilissus" look forlorn enough, as it is, in their stately exile in our Elgin gallery in London. How would they look in the Paris Salon, when poor Pheidias came day by day to the office to ask if some rich soap-boiler or pork-dealer had given him his price?

This, it is true, was the highest moment of human art, when everything combined in its favour. But much the same may be said of all that the world has agreed to honour. Think of that procession of Cimabue's "Madonna" at Florence, the scene which Frederick Leighton so well painted,—I often think it

the happiest subject in modern art, the young Giotto beside his master and the youthful Dante looking on with delight,—would it be the same to us if the "Madonna" had been ordered by a dealer and hung in the Exhibition with bits of *genre* and studies from the nude? It hangs now in Santa Maria Novella, as it has hung for some six hundred years, and seems to sanctify the Church, as it gave a new name to the *Borgo Allegro*. Would it be all the same if it had been "the picture of the year," and bought to adorn a contractor's mansion? Imagine Giotto at work in the Arena Chapel at Padua on his great Bible history, with Dante watching his work, suggesting subjects, and inspiring him with grand "motives." Or imagine Michael Angelo, shutting himself up in the Medici Chapel or in the Sistine Chapel, and communing with the mighty spirits of old alone. Or again, take Raffaelle in the Vatican, or Tintoretto in San Rocco. What would these works be in the screaming dissonance of a modern gallery, exposed to the higgling of the market, and designed to catch the accidental whim of some lucky investor? Everything that we love in art had its own time, place, occasion, inspiration. Titian, Velazquez, Rubens, and Vandyke, painted noble gentlemen and ladies in the costumes in which they lived, to hang in their own halls, amidst artistic surroundings of absolute harmony. Your R.A. to-day paints a bill-discounter in a red hunting-suit and breeches and a fur top coat; he charges him a thousand guineas; and the bill-discounter is very proud. Raffaelle and Bartolommeo painted Saints and Madonnas to place over altars; Veronese painted sumptuous groups for Venetian palaces; Rembrandt painted the men and the scenes amongst which his life was passed, exactly as he saw them, and for those who loved them. We have to rack our brains for



novel subjects, and first and foremost, we have to satisfy the dealer.

I know they say, "Why talk about Raffaelle and Titian, who are of course beyond all comparison? there are very good painters now, even if they do not belong to the grand school." And so, they say in literature, "Do not compare us with Milton and Shelley, Fielding and Scott: we have our own qualities, and ought not to be judged by classical standards." But this is the easy road towards decline —to lower the standard of excellence. The one thing essential is—to keep a high ideal of perfection steadily before us. Our achievement may fall short of our aim: but if our standard is true and lofty, we may end by reaching it. Counsel and criticism can do little enough, and, perhaps, least of all to help art. But this they can do. They can remind both public and worker of the higher levels to which art may rise and has risen. They can warn us never to rest satisfied with any lower level. Perfection and the highest must be always before our eyes. And those who, in the enjoyment of some pleasant fashion of the time, or in genuine admiration for some popular book, work of art, or style that exactly hits the mood of the hour, or the mood of a set—need to be reminded how far short of the best it is.

The mere thought of an ideal perfection is enough to convince us how impossible is any high type of art under a system of trade and money-making. The pecuniary standard, which more or less affects every form of intellectual and spiritual activity, seems to have a peculiarly deadening influence upon the visual arts. It is due, no doubt, to their direct and vivid effect on the personal senses, and to the close connection they must always have with the external adornment of life. The arts are necessarily a part of

luxury, public or private. And, now that private luxury has almost completely superseded public magnificence, the result on art is disastrous. Art flourished in the days when, as the Roman poet says,

Privatus illis census erat brevis,
Commune magnum—

Such was Athens in the age of Pheidias, Florence in the age of Lorenzo, and Venice, when her Doge's Palace was built and adorned. But, in an age when fortunes are made, either by pleasing vast numbers of persons, and those for the most part half-taught and rude of habit, or else by pleasing those who have amassed fortunes and nothing else—the pursuit of fortune is the ruin of art.

I may be asked, what practical measures I would advocate to remedy this state of things, a state of things which seems but another illustration of the old saying—that "the love of money is the root of all evil." There is no practical remedy: and my object in what I have said about poetry, literature, and art, is simply to insist that there is no practical remedy—or none of the immediate and direct kind. The only true remedy is that contained in the Apostle's words to Timothy:—"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." And it is as true for the artist or the poet to-day as it is for the divine and the disciple, as it was true for the Apostle's own son in the faith, whom he had left in Ephesus:—"But thou, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." Men hear these words in church on a Sunday, and for the next six days in the week they go to 'change and to their office, and contend for the turn of the market like hungry tigers at the hour of



meal. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts." And no snare is so cunning as that spread for those that will be rich in fame and money by their skill in art.

I took up my pen in order to show that this matter of aimlessness in art is at bottom a moral question—as all important matters must be—nay, is in truth a religious question, far more than one of *technique* or style or school. It may not be religious in the sense of the ordinary pulpit: and so much the worse for the ordinary pulpit. The pulpits in vogue utter little enough to instruct the artist how he may use his talent in a worthy way, and the preacher would be scandalised if he were asked to touch such mundane themes. But all the same, it is the business of religion and of social ethics to teach the noble use of imaginative gifts, and how a pure and lofty art may minister to the beauty of a noble life. If the churches do not know what this means, I am sorry for them. This is not the place, nor have I space left here, to explain all I mean, when I say that art is a mode of religion, and can flourish only under the inspiration of living and practical religion. In the meantime, I would say but one word to the ingenious youth who aspires to be an *artist* that he should shudder to become a *tradesman*, that he take up his high calling with "love, patience, meekness"—that he hold fast by all that is pure, all that is beautiful, all that is broadly human.

V

THOUGHTS ABOUT EDUCATION

(*From the "Forum," N.Y.*, 1891)

IT is with no light heart that I act on the wish of the editor that I should set down my experience of education as now carried on in the Old World. I cannot forget that I have had to take part in education in one form or other for nearly forty years; that I have been responsible for the education of sons of my own; that I have for years past joined in the discussions and conferences on this question: and now I feel at times that we are further off the right path than ever, as if our whole system were a failure. There are hours when I feel about education nothing but this,—wipe it out, and let us begin it all afresh.

It has long been a favourite idea of mine that many things work delightfully for good whilst they are spontaneous and unorganised; but when they are stereotyped into an elaborate art, and evolve a special profession or trade of experts, they produce unexpected failures, and end in more harm than good. Holidays, excursions, exhibitions, authorship, preaching, temperance,—a thousand good things and virtuous gifts,—end in monster jubilees, world fairs, book-making, pulpit-trading, fanatical tyranny, and other invasions



of peace and freedom. And few things suffer more than education by passing into stereotyped schemes set forth in the formulas of the day, and expounded by professional experts. A uniform system of education is a form of madness akin to a project for making men of one size or one weight.

After forty years or so I am coming round to think that the less we systematise education, dogmatise about it, even talk about it, the better. A good education is a general mental and moral condition, like a virtuous nature and a healthy body; and we are all treating it as if it were a special art or a technical craft, and could be taught like playing the violin, or tested like jumping. There is no test of a good education, and no specific for making a young mind active and full. Minds are far more various than physical constitutions, and infinitely more subtle. Education, in a true and high sense, implies the development of the mind to its perfection in a natural and complete manner; and yet, whilst every one can see the quackery involved in any art of universal health, we are still multiplying examinations, educational boards, syllabi, schemes, and royal roads to the making of fine minds.

If there is one thing on which all the great reformers of man's social life have insisted more than another, it is the essential unity of *education*, in its moral, mental, and active side, and the hopelessness of trying to build up a truly organic *education* out of many kinds of merely sectional *instruction*. It is like seeking to cure a case of nervous collapse by drugs. All real philosophers tell us that man is a complex, subtle, but single organism, which we can no more take to pieces and treat in segments than we can cut up his body. If there be such things as morality and religion, and if anything can be said or done by way

of inculcating them, or applying them to life, then education cannot be severed from morality and religion, and all real education must be inspired by religion as well as morality. Yet here we all are vowing that religion shall not meddle with education, and that morality belongs to a set of influences quite apart from schools and universities.

No one will suspect me of sighing for the old exclusive religious tests of orthodoxy, or of wishing to see our academies reformed on the pattern of a Jesuit college. I am not likely to forget that for me and for mine no place would be found in any theological seminary. I recognise the necessity, therefore, as things stand, of eliminating religion from our secular education; and, as I do not understand what systematic morality can mean if it have no religious direction at all, I am bound to recognise further that the moral part in our current scholastic systems has to be of a very formal, general, and simple kind. But since, in a truly normal education, religion is the very essence of noble work, and since morality apart from religion is a rattling of dry bones, all that we can do in education must be mere provisional makeshift.

We ask too much from education, we make too much of it, we monstrously over-organise it, and we cruelly overload it. Education can do for us infinitely less than we have come to expect; and what little it can do is on the condition that it be left simple, natural, and free. I have known very few men who were made into anything great entirely by their education; and I have known a good many who were entirely ruined by it, and were finally turned out as pedants, prigs, or idiots. Struggling to win prizes in examination, thinking always about the style current to-day, being put through the regulation mill, and poring over some little corner of knowledge for some



material object—may give a one-sided appearance of learning with nothing behind it, will turn out mechanical eccentricities like calculating-machines, may change an honest fellow into a selfish, dull brute, or leave a weak brain softened and atrophied for life. And the more we organise education, the greater is the risk of our finding this result.

All that education can really give is this: it can supply the opportunities of self-culture; hold forth new standards and ideals to aim at; it can bring the budding mind into contact with a formed and mature mind; shed over the young spirit the inspiring glow of some rare and beautiful intelligence. It can open to the learner the door into the vestibule of the great Library of the World's Wisdom; but it cannot cram its contents into his brain. It can show him a superior intellect in the act of collecting and distilling his materials. It can suggest, explain, correct, and guide in a very general and occasional way; but it cannot teach vigorous thinking, or thrust coherent knowledge into a raw mind, as a plough-boy can with trouble be taught to write, or to remember the multiplication table. The "three Rs," the merely mechanical instruments of education, may be thus rammed in by sheer labour (perhaps they must be so taught). But when we speak of "education," we are here meaning the higher training professed to be given in the superior colleges and schools. And in these it is often a cruel injury to a moderate or dull mind to have scraps of "prepared" information, and peptonised decoctions of science, hammered into its cells, or to have essays, poems, and systems of philosophy, "wrung," as Milton says, "like blood from the nose."

The ideal education (as imagined, for instance, in the academies of Plato and Aristotle) would be such

that a body of students, attracted by a great love of knowledge, should gather from time to time round some great teacher, till they had touch of his informing mind, grasped his method of thought, felt inspiration from his typical ideas, asked of him questions, and answered his questions to them; and then freely went their own way to work out for themselves his suggestions, and left him free to think, to observe, experiment, or write, until he was again ready to teach. Here is a creative mind lighting up other nascent minds, whom a sense of duty, and religious eagerness to behold the face of the great goddess Truth, have freely gathered together in the common desire to develop fitly each his own most diverse nature. That is an ideal education; though we all admit it is impracticable and impossible in the days of our nineteenth century.

What a gulf separates this from the actual education that we see and admire! No academic grove, but a barrack with regiments drilled like Prussian guards, every man of the whole five hundred or thousand polishing up the same lines, translating the same author, filling up every hour of the day with the same monotonous task, anxious about the next inspection, and eager to win promotion by rigid punctuality, and mechanical precision in drill. And the master and philosopher himself is now a drill sergeant, bound to repeat the regulation lesson, to exact minute discipline in thoughts, himself worn into a machine by eternal inspections, examinations, and formal observance of regimental orders. He, poor man, neither thinks nor observes; he neither judges his pupils in his mind, nor pretends to put them in touch with his own. He analyses, digests, serves out, and compels the repetition of the particular book or scheme of inquiry that for the moment is in



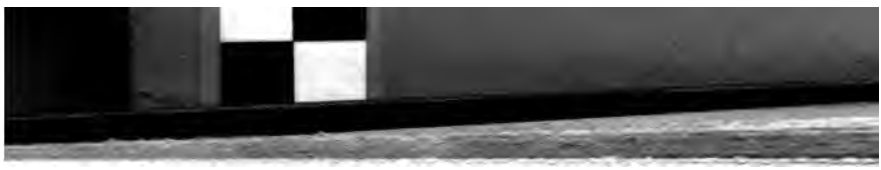
vogue in his particular academy. It is not for him to think: he has to repeat. He has to tell his pupils what the favourite authority in history, philosophy, or science, has said in his last book, and to see which of his pupils repeats the lesson with the greatest accuracy. Tons of written answers have to be "marked" each week or month; and the teacher is concerned, not with pupils, but with "papers." As if the repetition of what some learned man has written were knowledge, or as if the being drilled into uniformity by a dozen regulation tutors were the same thing as being inspired by the free suggestions of one powerful mind.

No one denies that drill is good in its place, for certain purposes; and so is discipline, punctuality, and rigid order. It all has fine moral uses for many natures; it can turn out troopers, artillerymen, and able seamen; and a dockyard, a factory, or a fire-brigade would be failures without it. But the question now is, if it can equally well educate minds, characters, imaginations, and hearts; whether we may not, in the spiritual and intellectual spheres, overdo the discipline, the uniformity, and the formal task. The question is, if young natures may not be stunted thereby, and growing brains choked, inflated, or sterilised. Yet, having carried out modern education to the highest point of elaboration and pressure that flesh and blood can sustain, we keep on calling for a still more intricate set of regulations and for more professional experts, (as the jargon has it) more incorrigible "educationists."

What is the reason for all this? for our age is neither perverse nor foolish, and reason there must be at bottom. The reason for our practice goes very deep down, and takes us into the spiritual foundations of human society. But then education must go deep down, and is akin to the innermost soul of social

phenomena. The reason for our practice, I hold to be, that education must normally rest on moral and religious motives, and is inextricably bound up with our ideals of duty in life, and our sense of the place of the individual in the world around him. We all admit that we are now hopelessly divided and in doubt about moral and religious ideals, about the motives to do our duty and our conception of man's present and future, in our reading of the voice of Providence and our estimate of a noble life. And, being so hopelessly divided into a thousand schools of opinion, we are resolved to rest education on purely intellectual bases, to surround it with material and pecuniary motives, to limit it "to what will pay," and to what we can bring to the visible test of "marks" by the first two rules of arithmetic.

It is to be hoped that the New World may be spared some of the evils which so fatally trammel education in the Old World. Some of the social and historic sources of these evils are peculiar to Europe, and unknown on the western side of the Atlantic. In England, at least, education has to be organised on almost rigid social strata; lower-class, middle-class, upper-class schools being strictly divided according to the wealth and social position of families. No "gentleman" ever enters an "elementary" school; no working man ever enters a "public school," as by an ingenious euphemism the exclusive seminaries of the rich are still described. And if a middle-class, or "commercial" school be not absolutely closed by expense or convention to the poor or to the rich, the rare and casual exceptions are not enough to break the rule that "intermediate education" means the teaching of the lower middle-class which are not artisans and are not called "gentry." I am not prepared to say how this could be altered at once in



such a country as England with its ancient and complex social conventions, habits, and hierarchy. But it is still true that to graduate education, from the age of nine to that of twenty-one, into strict ranks of the rich, the comfortable, and the poor, is to poison education in its roots, and from a social and moral point of view to make it an instrument for corrupting the mind. It was not so when there was a true education, in the ancient world or in the middle ages. And the bare idea of dispensing knowledge by castes or in money grades would have scandalised Socrates, Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, Epictetus and Plutarch, to say nothing of St. Bernard, Aquinas, Dante, and Petrarch.

Having got all wrong by this fundamental sin of apportioning out education to "gentlemen," to tradesmen, and to artisans, in the "public school," the commercial "academy," and the board school, all kinds of evils have been generated and increased. Pride of caste forces those who aspire to the term of "gentlemen," the governing class, which monopolises commissions in army and navy, the superior grades of the public service, the Church of England, and the learned professions—pride of caste forces them to cling to a "classical" education in its old pedantic form, the quoting of Latin without false quantities, and the writing of doggerel in Greek or Latin verses. I remember a lad at a public school who spent a weary afternoon over one Latin hexameter. This was the result,—

Cantabo laudes Martis, Venerisquĕ lascivaĕ.

At some of the most successful schools in England, boys spend whole terms in hammering out disgusting nonsense like this, before they have read a single

classical author, or can construe a page of Ovid and Virgil. A few of the boys are clever enough to catch the trick of longs and shorts, just as child gymnasts learn to balance themselves on the trapeze and the tight-rope; and these infant phenomena grow up to win prizes, scholarships, and honours, and turn into ignorant and shallow men. So far from this mental gymnastic in parrot-like imitation of the classical authors conducing to a love of ancient literature, it is my firm belief that the high-pressure system of composition pot-hunting destroys all real interest and knowledge of the great works of antiquity. Many a brilliant scholar has never opened Polybius or Strabo, Theophrastus or Plutarch, and the day after his last examination he is anxious to be rid of his classics along with his battered cap and his ragged gown.

I have so often already tried to point out the essential vices of the examination system, that I will not return to it, save to say, that, the more I see of it the more do I feel that it is ruining education altogether. Mechanical examination never can test any knowledge worth having: all that it can do is to debase and pervert education. The pupil has before him an end, which is not knowledge or mental culture of any kind, but success, money, applause, and superiority. The teacher has before him, not the improvement of his pupils' minds, but their "fitness" for the race; and those who set the papers (often the scurviest professional hacks) practically order the teacher what he has to teach. There are no doubt some ideal forms of examination which might be made fair tests of knowledge; as if a thoroughly competent teacher were left free to judge not more than a dozen or a score of students, and had a week or two and a free head to go about it in his own way. But this we



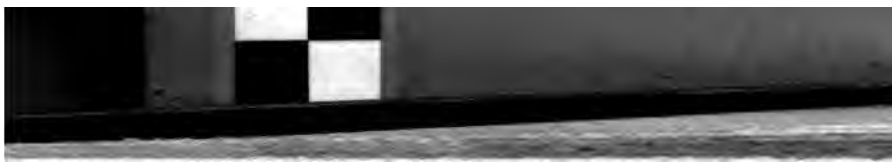
know is impracticable. There is no time; it would be too costly; and we will not trust any one's impartiality. When we speak of academic examinations, we mean five hundred students writing like stenographers for four or five days, at six hours *per diem*; the papers being "marked" mechanically under severe pressure by three or four overworked experts who never saw the pupils before, and are forced to pass or pluck them as a barrack surgeon does recruits.

The source of this shocking parody on education is at bottom a moral one. Wanting moral and religious motives and guidance in education, we fall back on material ones. We supply the pupil with coarse pecuniary stimulants; we will not trust the teacher unless we can calculate his results in figures, and prove his competence by the addition of marks. We trust neither pupil not teacher, and we give both low aims and ideals, and not high ideals and aims. And the same distrust of our moral control over education tends, in England at least, to foster the monstrous exaggeration of muscular exercise, which is now become a serious part of the educational scheme at schools and colleges. Boys and youths are prone enough to overrate their amusements without any stimulus, and need no teaching to put their studies as a bad second to their games. And now the modern schoolmaster and tutor snatches at gymnastics as the sheet-anchor of morality. He enforces games to the grave injury of boys' health, preaches from his pulpit the apotheosis of racing and football, in the feeble hope that by exhausting the body, he will make discipline easier, and check moral abuse.

The entire "public school," or barrack system, the college or cenobite system, as practised in England, with all their unnatural consequences and their

essentially material spirit, may be, as things are, necessary evils, but they are thoroughly abnormal and vicious in principle. The normal and noble education can only be given in *families*, and not in barracks or convents. The moral, religious, and social stimulus of education ought to rise mainly there, and its groundwork should come from the parents. That the parents, as it is, are unfit, unworthy, unwilling to do it, absorbed as they are in the struggle for existence and the race for gain, is the shame and grief of our materialist habits, for it does not release the parents from their duty. They can only hire experts to do their work, and test the experts' skill by the number of prizes that their pupils can bag, and the thousands of marks with which they can be credited.

It is too true now that few families can really give a high education, and few young persons can educate themselves even with assistance and opportunity. But there is no other way. The groundwork of education must be laid *at home*, and the essentials of education must come from the learner himself. The guidance, the inspiration, the higher organisation of education, belong no doubt to superior and special teachers. But only the rare superior spirit is worth much. The rank and file of hack teachers do more harm than good, except, it may be, in the mechanical rudiments of learning, which are hardly needed after the age of fifteen. From about that time of life it is guidance and inspiration that is needed, not hammering, cramming, and punishing. As years increase, what is wanted in education is far more freedom, individuality, diversity of bent, more leisure than we see now in the programme of any "educationist," nay, I will not hesitate to say it, more indulgence of any high taste, mere day-dreaming, if you will, in a word, more rest and peace. Education may help a man to form his



mind: it cannot make it for him, though it may twist it or crush it. And that education will be best which honestly acknowledges how little it can do outside the home, how small is its power for good compared with the natural and acquired forces of each man's brain and soul.

VI

EDUCATION *VERSUS* EXAMINATION

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1888)

My point in this discussion is:—that, having been called in to aid Education, Examination has grown and hardened into the master of Education. Education is becoming the slave of its own creature and servant. I do not deny that examination has its uses: I do not say that we can do without it. I say, that it is a good servant, but a bad master; and, like good servants turned bad masters, it is now bullying, spoiling, and humiliating education.

Those who teach are the proper judges of what should be taught, how it should be taught, and what are the results of teaching. One of the methods by which they have sought to test the results of their own teaching was by examination—one of the methods, an instrument to be used with discretion, moderation, and freedom. This expedient (a mere subordinate expedient) has silently grown into a system; it has perpetually enlarged its own jurisdiction; it has stiffened into a special profession; it has created a body of specialists called Examiners. As a body, the class of special examiners are younger men, of less experience, and, except in elementary schools, of



inferior learning, as compared with teachers as a class. They very soon evolve an artificial and professional skill, and set up hard, narrow, technical tests. Their business is not to teach; but to test whether the teachers are teaching and what the learners are learning.

This forces the learners not to attend to their own teachers, but to find some way of satisfying the examiners. Examination papers, not text-books, come to be the real subjects of study; the aim of the student is to get an insight into the mind of his examiner, not that of his teacher; and to master, not the subject of his study, but that artificial skill of passing examinations. Thereupon grew up another class of specialists —the Crammers. Their business is, not to teach, nor to test teaching; but to enable students to pass the tests. This soon became an art of its own, as artificial as playing whist, or the violin. So, in the cricket field, having called in professional bowlers to practise, it became necessary to call in professional "coaches" to teach the defence of the wicket. And in the result, Education is tending to become a highly exciting match, not so much between the players as between the "bowlers" and the "coaches." The Teachers are slowly thrust out and controlled by the Examiners; they in turn are checked and dodged at every turn by the Crammers; so that learning is fast passing into the grasp of two classes of specialists, neither of whom are teachers, nor pretend to teach.

I have myself had experience both of teaching and of examining for more than thirty years, in more than one University, and in several places of learning. Though not belonging to the special class of examiners, I have constantly been occupied with examining, have worked much with examiners, and have had no small experience of the practical working of the system.

I need hardly say that I regard the special examiners as a most acute, energetic, and conscientious body of men: and I say the same of the crammers as a class. Both do their work with great ability and conspicuous honesty. It is not the men; it is the vicious system which is in fault. Every teacher knows by experience that when he has to take his place in the examination curriculum, he has to submit to the system, and he does his best to practise the examining "art." And when, as every teacher nowadays must, he has to turn crammer, he tries to acquire the crammer's art?—*omnes eodem cogimur*. Teachers, examiners, crammers, and students, all have to take their place in the vast examining machine, which, like the Prussian military system, grinds out a uniform pattern. The huge examining mill grinds continually, and grinds very fast, unlike the mills of the Gods—but the grain it casts aside: it is designed to grind out the husk.

I do not say that we can do without examinations; nor do I object to all examinations, under any condition. My complaint is confined to the incessant frequency of examinations, the growth of the practice into a highly artificial system, the creation of a profession of examining, and its correlative the profession of cramming, the wholesale, mechanical, and hurried way in which the examinations are held, and the subjection of teaching to examining. In sum, I complain that the trick, the easily acquired and cheaply purchasable trick of answering printed questions, should now so largely take the place of solid knowledge and be officially held out as the end of study.

I shall say nothing about elementary schools. As these are compulsory by law, supported by rates and taxes, and administered by the State and public bodies, and above all teach mainly the mere rudiments, there may be reasons for an organised system of examination



which do not apply to the higher education. Here the examiners are clearly superior in learning to the teachers; the curriculum itself is more or less mechanical and capable of mechanical tests; and a certain uniformity may be inevitable, and a certain standard of efficiency must be tested. I do not approve of our present system of examining in elementary schools. But I desire to say nothing about it.

Nor shall I say anything about the physical effects of over-pressure by examination. It is not my subject and I leave it to others, merely adding, as is plain, that at least nine-tenths of any over-pressure on students arises from examinations and not from simple study. Nor shall I say anything about official appointments. I have no special theory or plan to support. As a rule, I think people whom we trust to govern must be trusted to select capable agents. If we cannot trust them to do this, let us not trust them to govern us. If examinations are required to restrain jobbery, I prefer to deal with the jobbery face to face and by direct means, and not to pervert all public and private education, in order to checkmate the wicked jobbers, and reward the best crammed ones.

Nor am I called upon here to devise a counter project and to suggest other tests than examination for distinctions and prizes. The distinction and prize system is already absurdly overdone; and nineteen-twentieths of the *tests* are wholly needless, or rather actively mischievous. We want neither distinctions, prizes, nor tests in anything like the profusion in which they are now poured out. Art, learning, politics, and amusement, are deluged with shows, races, competitions, and prizes. Life is becoming one long scramble of prize-winning and pot-hunting. And Examination, stereotyped into a

trade, is having the same effect on Education that the betting system has on every healthy sport. I do not deny that teachers may usefully examine their own students as a help to their own teaching. I do not say there may not be one public and formal examination in any prolonged educational curriculum. My plea is against that organised, mechanical, incessant, professional examination, by which education is being distorted and the spirit of healthy learning is being poisoned.

Examination, like so many other things, is useful as long as it is spontaneous, occasional, and simple. Its mischief begins when it grows to be organised into a trade, and the be-all and end-all of its own sphere. The less the student be "prepared," in the technical sense, the better. The more free the examiner be to use his own discretion with each examinee, the more likely he is to judge him fairly. It was so once. All this is now changed in the thirty or forty years since the examining mania set in. The myriad examinations which now encompass human life have called out an army of trained examiners who have reduced the business to a complicated art as difficult and special as chess. Like chess-playing, the art of examiner and examinee has been wondrously developed by practice. The trained examinee has now learned to play ten examination games blindfold. He can do with ease what the most learned man of the old school could not do. Gibbon would be plucked in the Modern History school. Arthur Wellesley would never get into the army. And Burke would have got low marks, through not apportioning his time to the various questions in the paper.

I seriously doubt if many of our great scholars, our famous lawyers, historians, and men of science



could "floor" off-hand a high-class examination paper. They would not put their knowledge in the sharp, smart, orderly, cocksure style which so much delights the examiner. They would muddle the relation of *shire-moot* to the *hundred-moot*, or they would forget the point in *Smith* v. *Jones*, or they might differ from the examining board as to the exact number of the *Isomeric Amyl Alcohols* now known. All this your trained examinee, well nursed by thorough crammers, has at the tips of his fingers. He "floors" his paper with instinctive knack—seeing at a glance how many minutes he can give to this or that question, which question will "pay" best—and trots out his surface information and his ten-day memory in neat little pellets beautifully docketed off with 1, 2, 3, (α) (β) (γ), the "five elements" of this, the "seven periods" of this movement, and the wonderful discovery (last month) of a new reading by Professor Wunderbar.

Of course all this does not take in the examiner. He knows that the student does not know all this, that this is not the wealth of the student's reading, or the product of the student's native genius. But what can he do? His task is to set questions, and the student's task is to answer them. If the questions on paper are answered right, *cadit quæstio*. The examiner's business is not with what the student knows, but with how many questions he can answer, and how many marks he can score. The examiner may see that he is not examining the students so much as the teachers, or perhaps the crammers. All that he can positively say is, that the candidate has been brought to the post perfectly "fit." The student may be writing down mere "tips" from memory; but if he makes no slip, and he has been carefully crammed, the examiner has to admit that he has got his marks. The examiner may doubt if the know-

ledge is real, or is worth anything. He cannot state that the man has failed. If he had time and opportunity he could easily ascertain that point.

But in many examinations there is no *viva voce* allowed; in most examinations the public *viva voce* is not thought decisive, owing to nervousness, temper, accident, and various points of temperament and manner. Few examiners now care to decide by *viva voce*; which in any case is done in a hurry and under disturbing conditions that destroy its value as a real test. An examiner has rarely the chance of trying a candidate with a fresh paper, or of giving him as many quiet verbal questions from time to time as he might like. There is no time, there is no opportunity. There are the rigid rules; the candidate is not accessible at the time wanted; he cannot be got into a state perfectly composed, easy, and master of himself. A quiet afternoon or a morning's walk would settle it all. But the clock goes round; the Machine grinds on; the list must be out in a few hours; the examiners cannot sit disputing for ever; an average must be struck, time is called, and down goes the candidate's name—usually, be it said, "with the benefit of the doubt."

This is no fault of the examiner. His task is very difficult, trying, and irksome. None but trained men can perform it; and it is wonderful how much trained men can do, and with what patience and conscience they make up their lists. But the higher examiner now has to mark on an average, in a week, from 2000 to 3000 questions, perhaps from 4000 to 5000 pages of manuscript. In this mass he has to weigh and assess each answer, and to keep each candidate clear in his mind, throughout eight or ten sets of papers. He is lucky if he can do this with less than ten hours per day of work at high pressure



—reading in each hour, say from fifty to a hundred pages of manuscript. He can no more waste an hour, or follow up a thought, than the captain of an Atlantic liner can linger in his ocean race. The huge engine revolves incessantly ; the examiner's mark-sheet slowly fills up hour by hour till it looks like a banker's ledger ; some fifty or a hundred candidates get into groups, of Jones, Smith, Brown, etc., or else Nos. 7695, 7696, 7697, etc., and soon Jones, Smith, Brown are labelled for life.

What a farce to call this Examination ! Any sensible man who wanted to engage a confidential secretary, or a literary assistant, or a man to send on some responsible mission, would not trust to a mark-sheet, so mechanical, so hurried. He would see each candidate once or twice alone for an hour or two, talk quietly to him, get him to talk quietly, leave him to write a short piece, set him to do a piece of actual work, try him backwards and forwards in spontaneous, unexpected ways, as the quality of each candidate seemed to suggest. He would not burden himself with more than four or five candidates at a time. At the end of a week, a sensible man could perfectly make up his mind which of the four or five was the best fitted for the particular work required, and he would almost certainly be right.

Nothing of this is possible in the official Examination. The "rules" are stricter than those of a prison. There is absolutely no "discretion." Discretion might let in the demon of Favouritism. The candidates are often numbered and ticketed like prisoners, to avoid the disclosure even of names. The precise number of papers is prescribed, and their preposterous multiplication leaves the examiner about one minute for each page of manuscript. With one or two hundred candidates to get through in a week

or ten days, the examination is really like the inspection of a regiment. The uniform and accoutrements must conform to the regulation standard.

It is supposed that examiners are masters of the situation and have a large range for a free hand. It is not so. The examiner's mind runs into groves, and a highly skilled class have sorted and surveyed the possible field. In each subject or book there are only available, in practice, some few hundreds of possible "questions." The system of publishing examination papers, and close study of the questions over many years, have taught a body of experts to reduce, classify, and tabulate these. So many become stock questions, so many others are excluded as having been set last year, etc.; and in the result a skilled examinee, and still more a skilled crammer, can pick out topics enough to make certain of passing with credit. Knowledge as such, and knowledge to answer papers, are quite different things. Student and examiner read books on quite different plans, if they wish to gain knowledge, or if they are thinking of the examination.

The memory is entirely different. The examinee's memory is a ten-day memory, very sharp, clear, methodical for the moment, like the memory cultivated by a busy lawyer, full of dates, of three different courses, of four distinct causes, of five divisions of that, and six phases of the other. It is a memory deliberately trained to carry a quantity of things with sharp edges, in convenient order, for a very short period of time. The feats which the examinee can perform are like the feats of a conjurer with bottles and knives. The examinee himself cannot tell how he does it. He acquires a diabolical knack of spotting "questions" in the books he reads. He gains a marvellous *flair* for what will catch the examiner's attention. As he studies subject after subject his eye



glances like a vulture on the "points." Examination is a system of "points." What has no "points" cannot be examined. Many able and industrious students do take the trouble to acquire this *flair*; some will not, or cannot, acquire it. But certainly a good many acquire it, by an outlay of labour or money, who are neither able nor industrious at all.

A man going through the full school, college, and professional career now passes from ten to twenty of these examinations, at intervals perhaps of six months or a year. From the age of ten till twenty-five he is for ever in presence of the mighty Mill. The Mill is to him money, success, honour, and bread and butter for life. Distinctions and prizes mean money and honour. Success in examinations means distinctions and prizes. And whatever does not mean success in examinations is not education. Parents, governments, schools, colleges, universities, and departments combine to stimulate the competitive examination and the mark-system. None quite like it; but all keep up the tarantula dance—"needs must when the devil drives." The result is that the Frankenstein monster of Examination is becoming the master of education. Students and parents dare not waste time in study which does not directly help towards success in the test.

One hears of the ordinary lad at school or college, either as amusing himself because "he is not going in this year," or else as "working up very hard for his examination." He is never simply studying, never acquiring knowledge. He is losing all idea of study, except as "preparation" for examination. He cannot burden his memory with what will not "pay." And a subject which carries no "marks," or very few "marks," is almost tabooed. Books are going out of fashion; it is only analyses, summaries, and tables which are

studied. But published examination papers are the real Bible of the student of to-day—*nocturna versanda manu, versanda diurna.*

Next to old examination papers, the manuscript "tips" of some famous coach form the grand text-books. One of the ablest men I ever examined, who bitterly complained that he had failed in a coveted distinction, was told that he had not read his books on a given subject. "Why!" he said indignantly, "he had not read the text-books; but he had mastered a valuable volume of 'tips' in manuscript, which was said to contain every question which could be set in a paper." He failed through pushing the system too far; and a tragedy was the end.

The Examination, thus made the "fountain of honour," governs the whole course of study. If the teacher takes up a subject, not obviously grist for the great Mill, the students cease to listen, and leave his classes. The instant he says something which sounds like an examination "tip," every ear is erect, every pen takes down his words. The keen student of to-day is getting like the reporter of an evening journal: eager after matter that will tell, will make a good "answer," capital examination "copy." The Mill governs the whole period of education, from *hic, hæc, hoc*, to the final launch in a profession. I know little boys of ten, in the *ego et Balbus* stage, who are being ground in printed examination papers, which I could not answer myself. And big men, older than Pitt when he governed England, or Hannibal when he commanded armies, are still ruining their constitutions by cramming up "analyses," and manuscript "tips" of great "coaches."

The result is that poor little urchins in frocks are in training for some "Nursery stakes," as an old friend of mine used to call the trials of preparatory schools.



The prize schoolboy who sweeps the board on Speech-day often gets a perfect loathing for books, and indeed for any study that is not "cramming"; and the youth who leaves his University, loaded with "Honours," may prove to be quite a portent of ignorance and mental babyishness. He has learned the trick of playing with a straight bat the Examiner's most artful twisters. But he cannot bear the sight of a book; and, like any successful speculator, he has a hearty contempt for mere knowledge.

Examiners are very clever men; but they ought not to form a sort of "Ministry of Education," controlling on one uniform and mechanical scheme the entire field of education. Examining is more irksome, less continuous, and worse paid than teaching. Hence, as a rule, the professional examiners are hardly men of the same experience, learning, and culture as the professional teachers in the highest grades. They have not devoted themselves to special subjects of study; they do not know the peculiar difficulties and wants of the student; they are not responsible for the interests of a given branch of learning. A body of professional examiners, moving about from great educational centres, tend to give a uniform and regulation character of all learning. Our educational centres are yet in far too chaotic and fluid a stage themselves to justify them in stereotyping any system.

Knots of clever, eager trained "experts" in the examining art are being sent about the country from Oxford and Cambridge, marking, questioning, classing, and certifying right and left, on a technical, narrow, mechanical method. They would be far better employed in learning something useful themselves. As it is, they dominate education, high and low. They are like the *missi dominici* of a mediæval king,

or the legates *a latere* of a mediæval pope. They pitch the standard and give the word. Public schools revise their *curriculum*, set aside their own teachers, and allow the academic visitor to reverse the order of their own classes. The Mill sets a uniform type for the University. Colleges give way and enter for the race. One by one the public schools have to submit, for prizes are the test; and success means prizes. Next the minor schools and private schools have to follow suit. And at last the smallest preparatory school, where children in nursery frocks are crying over *qui*, *quæ*, *quod*, has to dance the same *tarantula*.

For this state of things the remedies seem to be these. Let examinations be much fewer—they are ten times too numerous. Let them be much more free—they are over-organised, over-regulated. Give examiners more time, more discretion, more room. The more the teachers are themselves the examiners the better; the less examining becomes a profession and a special staff, the better. Do not set examiners to test teachers, as well as students; do not set up mechanical rules whereby to test the examiner. Believe that it is possible to learn without any prize, money, or reward in view. Trust the teacher; trust him to teach, trust him to examine. Trust the examiner, and do not set up a Mill. Above all, trust the student. Encourage him to study for the sake of knowledge, for his own sake, and the public good. Cease to present learning to him as a succession of races, where the knowing ones may land both fame and profit.



VII

LITERATURE TO-DAY

WHEN I am asked (as happens to-day) to respond to "the toast of Literature,"—optimist, or, rather, meliorist, as I am, I fall into a quite pessimist vein, and sing in a very minor key. As I look back over the sixty years since I first began to read freely for myself, English Literature has never been so flat as it is now. There never was so copious a torrent of sound English, sterling sense, industrious learning as there is to-day; but as to the witchery of form, native humour, mother-wit, creative genius—ah! how poor is the sum!

In my student days—say the mid-'forties and mid-'fifties—our poets were Tennyson, the two Brownings, FitzGerald, Rossetti—all at their zenith. So were Dickens, Thackeray, Bulwer-Lytton, Kingsley, Disraeli. The Brontës, Trollope, George Eliot, Swinburne, Morris, were just coming into line. Year after year Ruskin poured out resounding fugues in every form of melodious art. Our historians were Carlyle, Grote, Milman, Macaulay, Kinglake—then Froude and Freeman. Our philosophers were Mill, Spencer, Buckle, Newman, Hamilton, Mansel. As I look back over these sixty years it seems to me as if English Literature had been slowly sinking, as they

say our eastern counties are sinking below the level of the sea. Where shall we find an Arnold, a Pater, a Symonds, a Stephenson, such a fascinating historian as J. R. Green—such "a first-class fighting man" as Thomas Huxley?

Compare an early number of any one of the Reviews with any number of to-day. We shall find some seven to ten papers in any old number, each written in literary form; measured, thoughtful, filling a sheet, it may be two sheets, of print. To-day there will be seventeen or twenty-seven scrappy bits; tumbled out of the writer's note-book, and half of them signed by leaders of fashion or society "lions." Style, literary shape, and any more than fugitive purpose are flung aside. A name which the public can recognise, a "breezy" bit of gossip is what the reader wants—is all that he has time to notice. Railroads, telegrams, telephones, motors, games, "week-ends" have made life one long scramble, which wealth, luxury, and the "smart world" have debauched. The result is sixpenny magazines, four-and-sixpenny novels, "short stories" in every half-penny rag—print, print—print—everywhere, and "not a drop to drink"—sheets of picture advertisements—but of literature, not an ounce.

I am free to say this, because I am myself just as bad as any one, being quite indifferent to literary form. I do not pretend to be "a man of letters," and I felt the truth of a critic in the provincial Press the other day when he said of me, "the absence of literary style from his writings had conveyed a wrong impression of him to most of us"; and he kindly said that, in spite of having no style, I was a rather nice gentleman. Yes! as I said in my little Memoir, my business is to teach, to moralise, and reform, or to try to do so; and I am so intent on the matter in hand that I just blurt



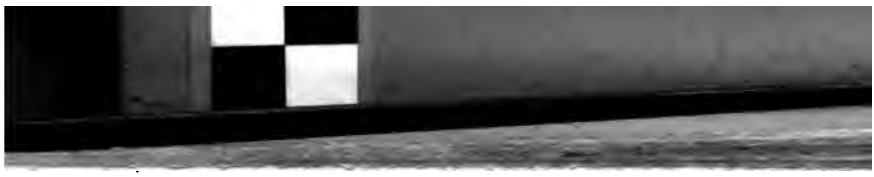
it straight out, and do not pretend to be what in the provinces they call a "stylist." But I think there ought to be stylists, and that a fine literary style is a thing to be desired; a form which enables true thoughts to be remembered, to live, and to work, without which even sound ideas fail to become lasting.

Now, why is good literature disappearing? The causes are complex, subtle, deep, and wide. They are —the increase of material appliances vulgarising life, and making it a scramble for good things. Next comes the vast multiplicity of numbers tending to uniformity, crushing individuality, flattening us out into a crowd of equal units. Lastly, comes the sudden spread of a low and mechanical instruction. Life has become infinitely faster, easier, machine-run; less spontaneous, less jovial, far uglier. The huge agglomeration of similar beings in our abnormal cities weighs upon the sense of personal independence. The mass of fellow-citizens, at once our equals, and our rivals, is too overwhelming to struggle against. We all have to conform to the fashion of the day. We dare not cut our coats or our collars to please ourselves: we are swept away by the irresistible torrent of "what everybody does now." The wonderful spread of what is absurdly called Education, but which is really nothing but the mechanical instrument of real culture, instruction in the "Three R's," has evoked an endless supply of vapid, dull stuff. Fifty times the print is poured out now than was done two or three generations ago. The bulk of it is of the same washy type. That type, by its mere volume, sets the "fashion." To ignore the type is to be "old-fashioned": to defy it is to be "a crank." And so the literary currency is debased.

Take the machine-made life we lead now. Steam,

electricity in a thousand forms, telephones, motors, typewriting, photographs at every turn; nobody writes a legible hand; we dictate twenty scrawls a day, where our ancestors would write one charming letter. We do not saunter about a lovely countryside, lingering over every new landscape, listening to every bird and watching every living thing; we rattle over it at twenty-five miles an hour, leaving a bad smell behind us and seeing nothing in front for our blue goggles. Every journal, or catalogue, or tradesman's bill we touch is disfigured with coarse, bad photographs. The grocer puffs his wares, the tobacconist puffs his cigars, the quack puffs his "diuretic pill" with the image of his own ugly mug. Novels have to be short, cheap, "up-to-date," and photographic. On the stage we want a live donkey and real smoke. How can Literature flourish in a world so mechanical, so commonplace, so uniform?

If Gibbon or Macaulay were to publish to-day, the academic critics would jeer at them for not knowing Professor Rumpelstiltzkin's last pamphlet on the "Dolichocephalic Races." If Scott were to publish *Ivanhoe*, we should be told it was "a bad joke"; old-fogyish in form and obsolete in local colour. What pays now for romance is Divorce Court scandal, the smart set on a motor-trip, or slum-talk in the East End. Photography and mechanics have forced Art, Literature, even Society, into a crude, monotonous realism. In pictures, in books, in conversation, what we must have is the minute reproduction of the obvious, commonplace things we see and hear every day. Imagination bores us: originality puzzles us: quiet grace is voted "insipid." When Carlyle in 1840 was advocating the London Library he said:—"The purveyor of popular literature must have an eye to the prurient appetite of the great million, and



furnish them with the kind of garbage they will have. The result is melancholy—making bad worse; for every bad book begets an appetite for reading a worse one. Thus we come to the age of pinch-beck in Literature." What would the Sage of Chelsea say to-day?

VIII

"FORS CLAVIGERA"

THE final Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin, in thirty-six volumes, has now reached his great serial and autobiographical medley called *Fors Clavigera*. More than anything "the Master" ever wrote, it may be called a "human document"—one of the most original, most frank, most tantalising in all modern literature. A book so mysterious has been judged with curiously different minds. Nothing "so notable," said Carlyle. "Watery verbiage," said the *Spectator*. "Studies in reviling," said a fine poet. "Ruskin's 'Hamlet' and also his 'Apocalypse,'" said his biographer in the "Men of Letters" series; and the editor himself now cites and adopts that judgment. Whatever else it may be, this huge book of 650,000 words, written month by month between 1871 and 1884, is the man, John Ruskin's self.

The Introduction to Vol. XXVII. (pp. 17-90), by Mr. E. T. Cook, contains the most elaborate biographic study of the whole series, and throws new and invaluable light on this extraordinary torrent of self-revelation, fierce Jeremiads, and dazzling fantasies. It may well be called a "Hamlet," an "Apocalypse," for it is now the profound moan of a somewhat



morbid genius, now the inexplicable vision of some inspired prophet. The inexhaustible labour of the editor has cleared up a thousand dark allusions, and has traced the curve of these fulminating flashes of lurid light. We now begin to see the mental connection between wood hyacinths, the battle of Marathon, and the match tax. There has never been since the commentaries on *Scripture*, or Cromwell's *Letters*, or Coke upon Lyttelton, any editing done with such minute industry and scrupulous reverence of the written word. And the written word *Fors* still remains one of the most Apocalyptic in our literature. Here Ruskin is only by fits and starts the expounder of Art. Poetry, Education, Religion hold the first place. He is the social reformer, almost the Communist, the prophet of a new Economic Utopia, the Evangelist of a new Gospel of the Old Faith.

And now, as one who has deeply enjoyed *Fors*, and, perhaps, somewhat excessively rated it as Ruskin's central work, I am bound to make a personal confession—almost a belated recantation. Like the rest of the world, even of the Ruskinian world, I was myself far too busy between the years 1871 and 1878 to be sending 7d. every month to Keston and to read through the pamphlets regularly, even when they contained paternal rebukes on myself. The only *Fors* I ever really read and knew was the edition in four volumes, small cr. 8vo., 1896. This handy edition reduced the eight full volumes to four moderate volumes of 500 pages, omitted all the Appendices, and much curtailed sundry parts of the ninety-six letters. I am free to confess that I greatly prefer the abridged *Fors* to the unadulterated torrent we now get, overlaid with cuttings from the *Daily Telegraph* and provincial prints, stuffed with silly letters from anonymous

correspondents and the gossip of æsthetic old ladies. The abridged and bowdlerised *Fors* was trivial and desultory enough in all conscience. But the "pure milk" of the Ruskinian word is to me a *purée* which my palate declines to approve.

Nor can I agree with the view that *Fors* should be read as a whole consecutively. It may be judged as a whole; but as to reading it right through, one might as well try to read through the *Encyclopædia Britannica* volume by volume. I suppose no one but a reviewer has ever done this, and, I fear, not all of them. For my part, I read it through in the shorter form when I wrote Ruskin's *Life*; and I have now read it again in the new longer form. But it does not gain in the process. The incessant digressions, the wild flights of fancy, the lyrical eulogies followed by furious anathemas of indispensable things and illustrious persons, and all this incoherent irony and commination—not with the merry badinage of Elia or Titmarsh, but in fierce earnest and passionate hot-gospelling—make *Fors* a book to dip into, to take up in a mood as desultory as that of the writer, but not a book to study seriatim and to digest from cover to cover.

Yet to open it in the same "fortuitous" way, how delightful, how stimulating, how devotional is its spirit! We see a much-tried soul, to whom the extreme beauty of Nature and of Art—beauty that he felt with an intensity of passion that none of us can reach—was yet dust and ashes whilst man's life remained so sordid, so gross, so cruel, whilst man's cupidity marred and vulgarised God's handiwork. What a noble thirst for a true "education," a real training of heart and character, eye and nerve, not a mechanical readiness to read—mere printed rubbish, to write accounts and a merchant's puffs of his



"faked" wares! What a deeply religious spirit lay in this heart, half crushed by early Calvinism, and then bewildered by modern rationalism, which it was too eager ever to understand, and too imaginative ever to study.

If one would see how serious, how practical, how truly spiritual Ruskin's teaching could be at its best, we should turn to Mr. Jolly's excellent volume, *Ruskin on Education*. Himself an expert in education, as one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, Mr. Jolly has had the happy idea of collecting into one little volume Ruskin's teaching on this subject, mainly using *Fors*. It was a fertile thought, and has been well executed. He shows us how Ruskin conceived Education, not a mechanical trick which could be, and too often is, misapplied, but a moral training of the nature along with a training of the senses and the bodily powers. Ruskin here, as Mr. Jolly shows, came nearer to Plato than any modern, at least any English, teacher.

And yet, when one has recognised all this noble spirit, all this genius, this heroic martyrdom of the social reformer who flung away his fortune, his life and peace, his passion for Art, in order to purify the world around him—what a sense of failure, of waste, of despair rings through all the lyrics and ironies of *Fors*, as the undertone or key whereon its melodies are built. He who was for ever preaching to us humility, submission, trust, was the most ungovernable, wilful, arrogant of men—in a high sense, the most utter egotist. He who cried out to men to obey and to follow, would follow or obey—no one but himself. He who was ever calling on us to learn would never learn anything but in his own way—all *de novo*—*ab ovo*—as if no man before him had ever learned anything, or ever taught anything.

'Twas a grand nature, a rare genius, sadly trammelled by a vicious education, an obsolete religion, an indomitable self-will—cruelly wasted by an ill-regulated passion which only too often broke through the bounds of perfect sanity.



IX

THE CENTURY CLUB

(*From the "Cornhill Magazine,"* 1903)

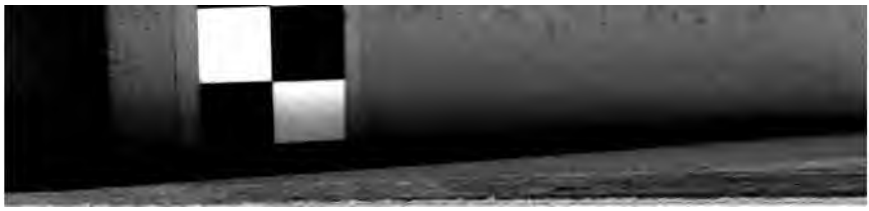
THE pleasant paper in the August number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1903, wherein Sir Algernon West recorded a few recollections of the Cosmopolitan Club, very naturally suggested to some veterans of the Century Club of the 'Sixties to gather up stray reminiscences of that society before the surviving members follow it into the great majority. The Century Club cannot boast the antiquity of fifty years claimed by the Cosmopolitan; it was merged more than twenty years ago in the National Liberal Club; nor can it pretend to such a roll of celebrities as Sir Algernon's graceful memory can recall.

The Century Club was essentially a political, not a social, club, with a very definite purpose and a strongly marked colour. That colour was the ardent faith of the younger politicians who believed in Gladstone, Bright, Mill, Goldwin Smith, John Morley, and Herbert Spencer, in the Fighting 'Sixties. Those were the days of the "Essays and Reviews" and Dr. Colenso polemics in the Church, of the fight to open the Universities to Dissenters, the fight over National Education, about Church Rates, State Churches, and

Reform of the Suffrage. It embraced the period of Mr. Gladstone's ascendancy in the House of Commons and his first two ministries, the Reform Act of 1867, the Irish Church Disestablishment Act of 1869, the Education Act of 1870, the Irish Land Act of 1870, and the long struggle over the Trades-Union laws, which was closed (only temporarily, it now seems) by the Acts of 1871 and 1875.

The resignation of the Liberal leadership by Mr. Gladstone in 1875, the apotheosis of Lord Beaconsfield in 1876, and the Imperial Durbar he inaugurated in the years from 1876 to 1880, threw a certain damper over the Century Club, which had lost many of its foremost politicians. And on the foundation of the Eighty Club the Century was ultimately merged—we may say, perhaps, was developed, enlarged, and glorified in the sumptuous palace at Whitehall Place, where its surviving members utter their hopeful *Floreat*.

I was myself one of the founders of the Century Club—indeed I think that I first originated the idea, which was talked over in my chambers in New Square, Lincoln's Inn, in 1866. Among those who took an active part in the foundation were Charles S. Roundell, who had been secretary to the Jamaica Commission and to the Universities Commission, who was secretary also to Lord Spencer in Ireland in 1869, and has represented Grantham in 1880, and the Skipton Division of the West Riding in 1892. Another was Henry Yates Thompson, well known for his munificent foundations, who contested South-west Lancashire as colleague of Mr. Gladstone in 1868. And one of the most active promoters was the Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley, long Vice-Chairman of the London School Board, who represented Oldham in 1880, and is now Lord Stanley of Alderley (1908). All four of us were young barristers with some leisure, and were in close



touch with the politicians, members, and journalists in the party of Gladstone, Bright, Mill, and Forster.

All of these statesmen are gone now. Their place and their party know them no more. As in 1908 I turn back in memory some forty years, I am sadly reminded how many of our comrades are gone, how wide is the gulf between those days and our own, how different are the ideals in the ascendant, the dominant spirits, the burning questions. How we should have shouted in derision at any one who, in 1867, had talked of converting the people to the gospel of "Dear Bread and Glory!" The ideal of the "Century" was not an imitation of the Cosmopolitan, except in form. It was to uphold definite and very strict principles of political and religious liberalism. It was to help fight the battles which Gladstone and Bright, Mill and Spencer, were fighting in Parliament and in public opinion. It was to have, not a social character, but a political and intellectual character. It was to consist not of celebrities, or of pleasant fellows, but of keen workers in the causes of freedom of thought and popular progress. Like the Cosmopolitan Club, it met at 9 P.M. on Wednesday and on Sunday nights. It met only to smoke, to talk, and to organise. The only refreshments were mineral waters; I am inclined to think—not even whisky.

Adopting the material form of the Cosmopolitan Club so far as meeting only for conversation on two nights of the week, it differed from the Cosmopolitan and most other clubs I have known in being a mere political and latitudinarian *tabagie*, as Carlyle calls King Frederick's smoking council. I have never touched tobacco in my life, except in the reek of other men's weeds; but such was my reforming zeal in my hot youth, that I consented to be poisoned nightly in the good cause. None of us, I think, were smokers;

but we agreed to make this concession to human weakness, though we barred alcohol, I think, out of regard for Sir Wilfrid Lawson. It was understood that candidates were not to be ineligible simply because they did not employ a fashionable tailor, and working men were to be as welcome as noble lords. Every member of the club was to be free to address any other member, with or without introduction or acquaintance. And every view was to be tolerated, for freedom of speech was an absolute principle.

I think the Club began, and existed some years, without any printed rules, and indeed without rules at all. The preliminary meetings were held in Lincoln's Inn, I think in the chambers of H. Yates Thompson, who was the first honorary secretary. Among the earliest members were (Lords) Bowen, Davey, (Sir) George Osborne Morgan, George Shaw-Lefevre, Henry Fawcett, Sir Charles Dilke, M.P., Thomas Hughes, M.P., Mr. Leonard Courtney, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Sir George Trevelyan, A. C. Humphreys-Owen, M.P. for Montgomeryshire, who was the second honorary secretary; T. B. Potter, M.P. for Rochdale, the friend of Cobden and Bright, and founder of the Cobden Club; James Bryce, M.P., (Sir) Leslie Stephen, Professor Huxley, Professor Beesly, Montague Crackanthorpe, K.C., (Sir) Charles Cookson, Mr. (Justice) Wright, John Morley—and of course Lord Houghton.

The Club was unlike ordinary Clubs, either political or social, in that it offered nothing but a talk on two nights in the week, when Parliament was not sitting, and was a kind of *Caucus* to effect definite political, social, and ecclesiastical reforms, without distinctions of class, or tastes, or social habits. I was myself a member of the Cosmopolitan Club in 1871, and have been a member of the Reform Club; of the "Dominicans,"



who dined on Sunday night at the "Cock," under the inspiration of Mr. Mill; of the Metaphysical Society, under that of Tennyson; and of the Political Economy Club. But my experience is that the Century differed from all, in that there were no meals to be had in it, no blackballing on grounds of personal fancy, and there were practical measures in Church and State to be discussed and supported. If the Club expired long ago, it was because its work was done, and almost every purpose it sought to effect had been fully accomplished. We are in a different world to-day—*autres hommes, autres mœurs.* And now that I have taken my name off these and many such societies and clubs—now that, in the peace of my rural retirement, I am trying to recall the roaring 'Sixties of Mr. Gladstone's earlier administrations, I see dimly through the haze of time that we played an honest and, I trust, a useful part.

We were anything but "Passive Resisters" in those days; and of course we soon drew the fire of Conservatives and Theologians of all shades. We were roundly abused, and absurdly caricatured as Nihilists, Atheists, and general Firebrands. One peculiarity of the Club was that its principles were for emancipation at once political, social, and religious. In that age of agitation about Tariff Reform, Labour Laws, Hyde Park Meetings, Church Rates, Disestablishment, Religious Tests, and Indian Imperialism, when Mr. Mill sat in Parliament for Westminster, and Mr. Gladstone was rejected at Oxford, the political, social, and religious questions were inextricably mixed. Most of the founders of the "Century" were, or had been, Fellows of Colleges, and they were in close touch with the Reforming party in the Universities. It was natural that the Church party in them should look with suspicion upon the London Club. One of

the best epigrams of the day was a sentence from Tacitus, which Dean Mansel proposed as a motto for the Club—*Corrumpere et corrumpi SAECULUM vocatur.*

Of course, the Oxford myth that the Club was a society of Freethinkers, banded together to destroy the Church, was a ridiculous gibe. Many Liberal clergymen were members, such as William Rogers, "Bishop of Bishopsgate," Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln, Professor Thorold Rogers, the present Dean of Ripon, the Rev. Llewellyn Davies, a recent Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and the Rev. Samuel Harvey Reynolds, a well-known journalist and author, and other University Professors and Tutors. I think most of those who took active part in freeing the Universities from religious tests were members of the Club, as were also most of the writers in the two volumes, *Essays on Reform* and *Essays for a Reformed Parliament*, of 1867. The Club was for some years a sort of recruiting ground whence were gathered members of the Cobden Club, and writers in the Liberal Press. Mr. Thomas Bayley Potter, M.P., was a frequent attendant, as were Frank H. Hill, lately Editor of the *Daily News*, Mr. Herbert Paul, Sir John Macdonell, and Mr. Samuel Butler, the ingenious author of *Erewhon.* Many of the men active in politics, literature, and journalism on the Liberal side, between 1865 and 1880, were members of the Club. But as, in my rustic solitude, I cannot get access to any printed lists of members, I am unable to give a more complete or accurate roll.

I do not remember that, in the earlier days at least, there were any printed documents at all. There was a candidates' book in manuscript, which I am told, when the Club was wound up, fetched £6 : 16 : 6 at auction for the autograph market. And cheap at the price; for the book must have had some



interesting signatures. One of the most regular attendants and one of the loudest talkers was the late Henry Fawcett, who would occasionally cause some laughter by giving his opinion about persons who were in the room and within hearing. But it was Liberty Hall; and all opinions and all persons were equally free.

The mode of election was peculiar. Members were selected by a small committee, which had to be unanimous. There was no ballot, but one veto barred the election; and candidates could be continually submitted for selection by the committee. I believe that Lord Davey, and at least three others of the present Judges, and several Privy Councillors of to-day, have at times served on the committee of selection, as, I think, did Professor Huxley, Sir Charles Dilke, the late Warden of Merton, and the present Lord Stanley of Alderley. The *sine qua non* was not so much eminence, clubbable gifts, conversational brilliance—but the pure milk of Liberal doctrine. As tests of the "pure milk" of the Liberal Word vary a good deal, and as public men not unfrequently change their views (as indeed we see to-day!), it is to be feared that so rigid a scrutiny caused some ructions.

Peers, as such, were not excluded, but their Liberalism was closely tested. The seventh Lord Airlie, Lord Amberley, Lord Brassey, the inevitable Lord Houghton, and others, were accepted. There is a "saga" that a well-known Duke, who once sat as a Liberal in the House of Commons, was held to be not quite up to the high temperature of the Radical thermometer. Our dear old Lord Houghton once gave us an impassioned appeal "to give our days and nights to literature,"

Vos exemplaria Graeca
Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.

"You should feed on the best authors, go to sleep on them, dream of them," said he, in a sort of after-dinner speech. The discussion went on till a speaker observed his Lordship fast asleep in his chair over the fire. "Yes," he said, "the noble Lord is still dreaming of the best authors."

The Club began its meetings in a rather hugger-mugger way, as a casual lodger: first of the Alpine Club near Charing Cross; then in the rooms of a "Captain" somebody, who was said to be a bill discounter; and eventually in Pall Mall Place, in an old seventeenth-century room which was veraciously affirmed (by the owner) to have been once the drawing-room of Nell Gwyn. The Club thereupon broke out into Ladies' Evenings, those days being the age of Mr. Mill and the "Subjection of Women." The subjection of Man, at any rate of Century Club Man, followed not long after these orgies. The founders married, got too old, or at least declined to debate Bills in Parliament at 2 A.M. I and others took off our names. I am told that the Club was eventually expanded into the National Liberal Club, which, along with the Eighty Club, now extends its hospitality to such survivors of the "Century" as did not slide into Unionism at the great secession of 1885-86.

P.S.—Other members, I am told, were:—

Walter Bagehot.	Vernon Lushington, K.C.
Dr. E. Caird.	Walter Pater.
(Sir) Andrew Clark.	(Lord Justice) Rigby.
Arthur Cohen, K.C.	Lord St. Maur.
Hon. Henry Cowper.	Henry S. Smith.
(Sir) Henry Cunningham.	Thomas Chenery.



(Sir) George Dasent.
Albert Dicey, K.C.
(Sir) M. E. Grant-Duff.
(Sir) Joshua Fitch.
Sir Alexander Grant, Bart.
(Sir) Courtenay Ilbert.
(Sir) Godfrey Lushington.
Herbert Spencer.
(Sir) James Stansfeld, M.P.
J. Addington Symonds.
Professor John Westlake.
James Woolner.
Sir George Young, Bart.
Albert Rutson.

X

SIR LESLIE STEPHEN

In Memoriam (1904)

(*From the "Cornhill Magazine," April* 1904)

Not a few of us have lost in Leslie Stephen a wise and generous spirit—one who recalls to us forty years of strenuous devotion to letters, a memory which goes back to the stalwart men of the mid-Victorian epoch—those spacious days of Mill and Spencer, Carlyle and Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and Stevenson, Tennyson and Browning, Bright and Gladstone. They are all gone. And he who knew them all, and at times interpreted them to us and at times would wrestle with them himself, is gone to join them in the true Temple of Peace and Conciliation—where those who have taught aright speak still with a more solemn voice, and, by some mysterious influence, speak henceforth with a more mellow and harmonious voice.

As, on Wednesday, February 24, in the sombre chapel at Hendon, the coffin stood on the bier in its violet covering before the portal of the crematorium, the profound silence was charged deep with a thousand memories to the friends who were gathered for the last time around him. There were men and women



who had grown to old age in close touch with him—who had worked with him, worked for him, argued with him, received help from him, enjoyed life with him, who had loved him, whom he had loved —men who had served the State, or served the people, who had governed provinces, formed schools, written their names in the roll of statesmanship, literature, and science for the best part of two generations. Stephen's last book, composed, we might say, on his very death-couch, appeared to the public almost on the day of his funeral. He died literally in harness, as the Roman emperor said a general should die, erect and in his armour. But the inner memory of Leslie Stephen will remain for us his coevals as a stalwart of the mid-Victorian age.

I have been asked for a few reminiscences of Stephen, more especially as to his relations to the *Cornhill Magazine*, begun by his father-in-law, W. M. Thackeray, and to the enterprising house with which he was so long associated. Without pretending to be one of his intimates, my friendship with him dates from his first settling in London, some forty years ago; and ever since we have been treading somewhat similar paths. He was my junior in age by one year. We both were students at King's College at nearly the same time. We had many friends in common, and saw much the same society. We belonged to the same clubs. We were both the presidents of ethical societies, and occasionally spoke on the same platform. I heard him speak at the Alpine Club, and had many a mountain walk with him. We ascended together Mont Blanc with his two famous Oberland guides, Melchior and Jacob Anderegg, with whom I, too, have had many a glorious climb; I have tramped with him, also, on the Surrey Downs, and in many a mid-day jaunt in

Kensington Gardens, or in some midnight stroll home from the Cosmopolitan, or the Century Club, or Metaphysical Society. We were for some thirty years colleagues in the management of the London Library. We used to meet at one time daily at the British Museum, for we have both known the cares of an editor; and I even planned, edited, and in part indited a minuscule dictionary of universal biography, a mere liliputian contemporary—*longissimo intervallo*—of the stupendous *Dictionary of National Biography*. With no pretensions myself to his wit, his learning, his judgment, and prodigious industry, it is with heart-felt sympathy that I try to jot down my memories of one whom I respected so entirely and admired so heartily; with whose life I was in touch at many points.

For the ancestors, family, parentage, and young life of Leslie Stephen we happily have, what is for the earliest years, a chapter almost of his own autobiography in the opening of his memoir of Sir J. Fitzjames Stephen, his brother. It is one of his most delightful and genial pieces. In telling us all that he could learn, and all he thought we would care to hear, as to the origin of the Stephen family, as to their characteristics, ways, and ups and downs of life, Leslie was practically writing it for himself as much as for his brother, the judge. Much more is that the case in his admirable picture of his father, Sir James Stephen, and of his mother, the daughter of an almost historic family of Puritan ministers of the Gospel. Leslie, far more than Fitzjames, inherited his moral and intellectual nature from his parents and their ancestors. Like the Gladstones, the Carlyles, the Ruskins, the Stevensons, and the Mills, the Stephens were a family of Scotch Lowland descent. From his father he drew his literary versatility and grace, his industry, his tolerant, precise, and judicial instinct. From his mother he



drew the grit and courage with which the Venns for three centuries witnessed to the Truth—from his mother came the affectionate spirit which the grit never repressed nor even concealed—and that paramount grasp of ethical honesty, that disdain of vain parade, which was his most salient characteristic through life.

The famous motto of the *Dictionary of Biography*—"no flowers"—was quite typical of his whole nature. And one who ventures to write a reminiscence of him, now that he is no more, is bound to keep this injunction ever in mind. We went to Hendon to say farewell to our friend—not to praise him; and we should have been hurt had we seen his coffin smothered in wreaths and what the reporters call "floral tributes." Nor shall my tribute be floral. As he asked once, with some indignation and with unusual asperity: "Can you not praise the dead man sufficiently unless you tell lies about him?" No one ever more disdained superlatives, and more insisted for himself and for others that the plain truth should be set down in the simplest words.

Stephen's connection with the *Cornhill Magazine*, with its editorial work, and with the late Mr. George Smith and his publishing house, was very long and very close. For some seventeen years (1866-1883) he was a constant writer in those pages. For eleven years (1871-1882) he was Editor. He married the daughter of the first editor, W. M. Thackeray, whose other daughter, Lady Ritchie, long continued to contribute. When Mr. George Smith decided to publish the great undertaking known as the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Stephen retired from the *Cornhill* to become the editor of the *Dictionary*. It was in the *Cornhill Magazine* that appeared the series of papers which afterwards became one of his best books,

together with a vast number of other essays, known or unknown, collected in volumes or not reprinted.

I have had the opportunity of consulting the careful record of every article and every writer in the Magazine, kept with extreme care and accuracy by Mr. George Smith in his own hand. These monthly diaries, so punctually and methodically kept by the head of a great house of business over so long a period, form a striking proof of the zeal and thought which the famous publisher bestowed on his literary undertakings. In studying the catalogue of the books of standard reputation which first appeared in this monthly serial, and in going over the list of the contributors, with so large a proportion of the best writers of the Victorian age, it is noteworthy how little there is of merely fugitive work, and how largely the Magazine has been the cradle of some of the best literature of its time.

Stephen's first pieces in the Magazine seem to have been in 1866—one on "American Humour," and another on "A Tour in Transylvania." I think the first was that which introduced English readers to some of those familiar bits of American drollery which are still current. In the next year (that of his marriage) came the delightful paper called "The Regrets of a Mountaineer," which we all know in the *Playground of Europe*, published in 1871, and frequently reprinted. The serio-comic chagrin of the veteran mountaineer, as he ruefully watches others climbing the snowfields he cannot now reach, owing to "circumstances he need not explain"—(we easily see that he was then on a honeymoon trip); his pathos over the joys which were denied him:

> A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

This is, indeed, delicious.



All Stephen's Alpine pieces are delightful, full of his "saving common sense," his hatred of superlatives and ecstatics, with his sound advice that the best amateur climber is inferior to an average peasant, with his deep passion for Nature, and his hearty sympathy with the Swiss guide at his best. Of all these pieces I most enjoy "Sunset on Mont Blanc," published in the *Cornhill*, October 1873. Only practised climbers can understand the difficulties of watching the sun set in August from the actual summit of Mont Blanc, and then returning in the dark—difficulties which Stephen neither conceals nor exaggerates. But the piece has a depth of thought, a solemnity, even a poetry, which is too rare in his critical pieces.

Stephen's long series of critical studies of the eighteenth-century writers began in 1868, with "Richardson" and "De Foe" (the *Cornhill Magazine*, January and March); but the "Hours in a Library" was not opened until May 1871. Throughout the year 1869, the Magazine was constantly occupied with the papers by a "Cynic." "The Cynic's Apology," opened in May 1869. Then came "Idolatry," "Useless Knowledge," "The Decay of Murder," "National Antipathies," "The Uses of Fools," "Social Slavery," "Literary Exhaustion," and many others. He closed the "Cynic" series on becoming editor, and, I think, did not reissue them. He was right. They were full of Stephen's genius of common sense, his quaint humour, his contempt for extravagance, his disgust for false sentiment and artificial gush; but they are not his best, nor do they reflect his higher thought. Leslie was no cynic; he had no love for cynics; he thoroughly saw of what affectation and egoism professed cynicism is manufactured. Leslie was closer to Thackeray and Lowell than to Swift. He had a deep vein of sentiment and

enthusiasm, which he kept battened down in the hold. The Cynic papers are worth rereading, but they do not add to his reputation, nor do they truly represent his mind.

It seems that Stephen began to edit the *Cornhill Magazine* in April 1871, and during the next ten years he contributed the "Hours in a Library," which has been so often reissued, and forms, perhaps, his most popular and characteristic work. And during the same period he contributed the four papers, "Rambles among Books," 1880-1882. The "Hours in a Library," and the "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," the volumes on Pope, Johnson, Swift, and George Eliot, are so well known, that nothing need here be said of them, and they are studies far too elaborate to be discussed in these hasty reminiscences. What I would specially commend is the great body of excellent and permanent literature which the *Cornhill Magazine* contained during Stephen's time as editor. These included "Literature and Dogma," and several essays by Matthew Arnold, poems by R. Browning, W. M. Thackeray (posthumous), Sir F. Doyle, and Alfred Austin. There were romances by George Meredith, Miss Thackeray, Erckmann-Chatrian, Charles Lever, Mrs. Oliphant, W. Black, R. D. Blackmore, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Mrs. Lynn Linton, and James Payn. Most of these romances continue to hold the public; and some of them are among the best and most popular achievements of their authors. But that of which the public is perhaps less aware is the great number of essays contributed by R. L. Stevenson and W. E. Henley. It was one of Stephen's most cherished memories that he had discovered and encouraged the rare gifts of these two men, whose literary career had opened under such crushing difficulties of poverty and ill-health.



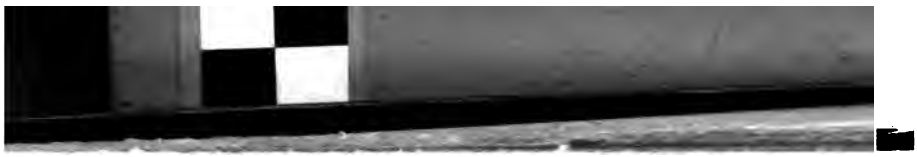
Altogether I reckon that Stephen contributed to the *Cornhill Magazine*, from 1866 to 1883 inclusive, forty articles on general subjects, apart from the critical and biographical studies collected in his published works. Several of these, I think, might with advantage be reissued. They deal with natural scenery, topography, social and ethical criticism, literature and the writers of the day. As befitted a miscellany of the kind, they hardly touch on politics, science, philosophy, or religion. Among the most interesting essays are, I think, those entitled "Useless Knowledge," with its humorous proposal for a new Society for the Suppression of Useless Knowledge (the S.S.U.K.), which, he said, would give us more leisure to learn what would be of some use. "Social Slavery," "Our Civilisation," "Public Schools," "International Prejudices," "Art and Morality," "Criticism by a Critic," "The Moral Elements in Literature"—all have some excellent things, full of acuteness, humour, wisdom, and fine discrimination.

In his published works Stephen wrote at large on philosophy, ethics, and religion, but nothing on politics, art, or science. The latter were subjects from which he kept steadily aloof—not at all from indifference, but from a conscientious sense that he had never given his mind to them, and had an almost morbid horror of appearing to dogmatise in any study in which he could not pretend to be a "doctor." In his *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, his *Science of Ethics*, *The English Utilitarians*, *An Agnostic's Apology*, and in *Religion and Ethics*, Stephen treats at great length, and with much elaboration, the common ground of morals, philosophy, and religion. His general point of view is that of Bentham, Mill, Spencer, and Henry Sidgwick, with some affinity to Huxley, Darwin, John Morley,

and Comte. Not that he can be called a follower of any one, or an entire believer in any system. His task was mainly expository and critical, rather than constructive; nor can it be said that he brought much that was at once new and permanent to these problems. They show at its best all his acumen, his paramount common sense, and his shrinking from all modes of spiritual exaltation. They lack a large and sympathetic grasp on general history; they never rise to face the great underlying axioms of human thought and the primal statics of human society; and they rather mock than encourage what is vaguely described as "the enthusiasm of humanity." The whole field of thought is far too wide and subtle to be touched upon here.

For similar reasons, I shall not attempt to do more than refer to the vast undertaking which absorbed the later years of Stephen's life from 1882. He planned, directed, and edited the first twenty-six volumes of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, for which he compiled an immense series of biographies. The world of letters, like the world at large, has so completely recognised the admirable scheme of the work, the unflagging labour bestowed on it, and the completeness of the result, that not a word more need be said here. Every year increases the value of this truly encyclopedic work, which must remain a permanent landmark in the history of our literature. And, apart from all questions of accuracy and literary skill, we cannot fail to recognise the robust moral qualities displayed in so gigantic an undertaking both by Editor and by Publisher, in the courage, tenacity, and far-sighted faith to which both held fast under growing difficulties that few of us would care to face.

I will say a few words about the last book of all, which was practically a posthumous issue of lectures



that Stephen was not strong enough to deliver in person, and which have not yet been widely read. *English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century* was the Ford Lectures at Oxford in 1903, and it deals with his old familiar writers with some new lights on their contemporary society. There is pathos in the short prefatory letter to his nephew, Herbert Fisher, of New College, who read the lectures and passed the proofs. He there speaks of "the serious breakdown in health," which prevented his journey to Oxford. As a fact, I visited him whilst on a couch he was writing the papers, struggling all the time with a cruel and painful disease. The letter itself is marked by Leslie's warm-hearted nature and irrepressible humour. It is signed "With a warm sense of gratitude, your affectionate Leslie Stephen." And even on his death-bed he cannot resist a playful allusion to "the light in which uncles are generally regarded by nephews."

The book itself contains almost nothing new, and very little that shows his old passion for getting to the root of everything he touched. It was designed for Oxford students dealing with a particular century, and needing a practical compendium of the whole epoch. This it gives them with admirable clearness and neatness of form; and it is exactly the text-book which a student would desire to have at his finger-ends. It is the book which a master of the subject who had entire command of his memory and his judgment, but who was debarred from research or reference to a library, would be able to produce—which could only be produced by one who was master of his facts and his books. I came upon an admirable sentence, which sums up Stephen's own literary judgments: "The eighteenth century, its enemies used to say, was the century of coarse utilitarian aims, of religious in-

difference, and political corruption; but, as I prefer to say, was the century of sound common sense and growing toleration, and of steady social and industrial development."

That is Leslie Stephen's message to our time: sound sense, toleration, social development. It is a worthy and great message. But, perhaps, it is not the whole message that we need. In his own field he was a consummate guide and a most accomplished critic. With all his sympathy for Carlyle and his school, Stephen did much to correct that violent prejudice of the Sartorian master against the eighteenth century and its notable work. With all its shortcomings and its want of poetry, fervour, and spiritual insight, it was the century of common sense, of toleration, of social and industrial development. All this, on every side of it, and in all its fruits, Stephen showed us in an immense series of special studies. He did for the eighteenth century almost as much as Carlyle did for Cromwell and for Goethe.

It is the age of specialism, and Stephen was essentially a specialist. He was the apostle of the eighteenth century, saturated with its intellectual clarity and its contempt of fanaticism and enthusiasm, and sharing in its limitations and its prosaic ideals. In his own field, Stephen was all that we need as an interpreter, judge, and stimulus. He never pretended to be an all-round critic, or a guide to general literature, much less to the history of thought as a whole. His strength lay in his concentration on his own field—his strength, and, to some extent also, his weakness. He very rarely strayed outside the area of the eighteenth century, and the first half of the nineteenth century. And he almost never strayed off the field of English literature and English thought. We have learned nothing from him of French, German, Italian, or



Spanish literature—much less of Greek and Roman poetry. We do not recall any estimate of Dante, Ariosto, Boccaccio, Rabelais, Corneille, Molière, Voltaire, Cervantes, Calderon, Goethe, or Lessing—nor of Homer, Æschylus, Lucretius, or Virgil. We do not find that he ever studied the Middle Ages, the development of the Catholic Church, of the modern spiritual and religious renascence. Had he done this he would have given us another series of masterly studies; but we might have lost the Leslie Stephen whom we knew (whom the reading world will long continue to know and to honour)—as the standard authority upon one of the most fruitful epochs of English letters.

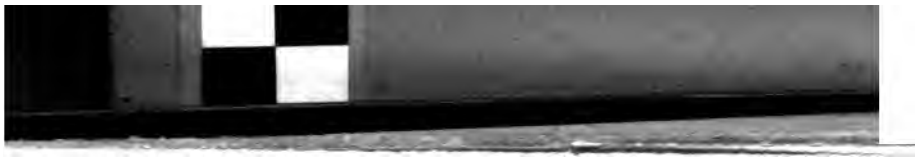
XI

FRANCIS W. NEWMAN

(1897)

THE death in extreme old age of Francis Newman, the oldest and most eminent of modern Theists, should not pass unnoticed; for the manifold gifts and beautiful character of the man must deeply interest us, however much on philosophical grounds there is felt to be between us a wide gulf in opinion. He has suffered from that which is often the penalty of abnormal longevity in an age so furious after new things, so indifferent towards good work which it imagines to be obsolete to-day. Those who outlive by forty years the zenith of their reputation pass away silently without a word of recognition from a new generation which has grown up under other influences.

The present generation has little idea how deeply the old hermit of ninety-two, who has been so quietly laid in his Western grave, acted on the inquiring minds of the middle of his century. Not that he ever founded a school of thought, much less ever put forth a system of belief of a positive kind—but he exercised a certain fascination over the younger minds mainly by the fine traits of his unworldly spirit and by the singular elasticity of his genius. Our space



would not admit even a bare enumeration of his many endowments and a mere catalogue of his books, addresses, verses, and homilies. Perhaps no man of our time ever acquired such curious stores of disparate knowledge, or published writings on such a vast series of different topics. The mere list of these topics takes away one's breath. He wrote on the Higher Mathematics, on Philosophy, Philology, Theology, Morals, Politics, Political Economy, Latin and Greek Poetry, Hebrew, Arabic and Libyan Literature, on Æschylus, on Aristotle, on Homer, on Horace, on the theory of translating the Classics—to say nothing of religious and political addresses, essays "On Diet," a Memoir of his brother, the Cardinal, and a Manual of Family Devotion.

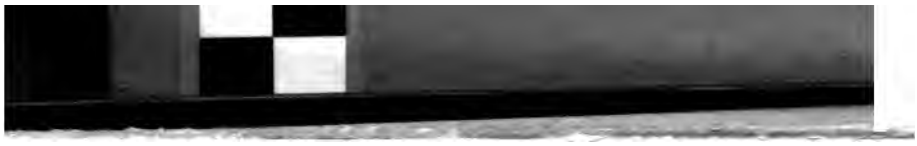
It is not to be supposed that, with such multifarious learning, and such a medley of keen interests, the work is of equal value throughout. But few of his various pieces are without that rarest of qualities—the eager zeal of an acute mind to teach, elevate, and stimulate others. His courage, his simplicity, his enthusiasm shone out in all he touched—be it Scholarship, Literature, Politics, Ethics, Science, or Religion. He never wrote a line unless he had something to say which he felt to be of moment and real truth, and he never said anything which he had not fully thought out for himself. As to himself, he was utterly fearless, disinterested, and frank. And for some fifty years without a break, in spite of opposition and neglect, he has kept on pouring forth the overflowing of his eager brain and his passionate zeal after moral and intellectual Reform.

The main work of Francis Newman has been to take a leading part in the evolution of religious thought out of that superstitious Bibliotry in which it was sunk in the first half of this century, in freeing so

many an earnest spirit from the thraldom of a hide-bound orthodoxy of mechanical creed and ignorant Pharisaism. He made honest minds acknowledge how grossly the conventional Theology misunderstood and distorted the ancient Scriptures which it professed to expound. And, although Newman did not reach to the level of the best critical exposition of later days, his pure and fine feeling, his earnest and acute sense of truth, honesty, right and wrong, exercised a potent force over thousands whom he did not wholly convince or carry with him to the end.

As a reconstructive power he was evidently far less successful than as a solvent. He has been for nearly fifty years the acknowledged chief in this country of the pure Theism of Theodore Parker, Emerson, and Kant. Theism, as a substantive scheme of religion by itself, has had followers of more philosophic and literary power than Newman; but it has had in our country no apostle of such long experience, consistency, and enthusiasm. Francis Newman preached the Theistic Church with all the conviction, the fervour, and all the devotion of self that his brother, the Cardinal, gave to the Church Catholic. The Church Theistic acknowledges no Hierarchy, and perhaps disdains it. But if there were a Sacred College of those who worship God only, recognising but one Divine being, and who discard both Scripture and Creed, the name of Francis Newman might hold in it a higher place than that of the Cardinal himself.

It is difficult to think of the one Newman without the other, with all their startling points of contrast and of union. Both begin life in the same family influences and teaching; both are men of fervent religious feeling; both are bold, disinterested, eloquent, indefatigable, with the temper of the apostle and the martyr. Both lead new movements in religion,

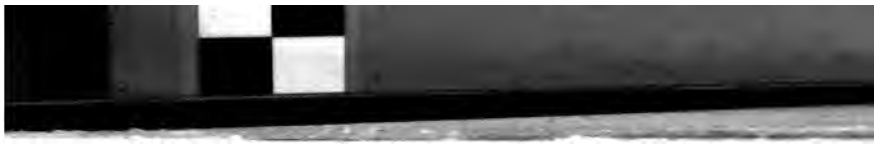


forsaking their Church, their obvious careers, their associates, and their early hopes. The one passes through agonies of doubt into the severest form of Catholic Orthodoxy, of which he becomes the staunch exponent and the eminent Prince. The other surrenders first the Christian ministry, and then the Christian communion for conscience' sake: he lives and dies under the ban of current orthodoxy; and retires into an obscure old age of labour and counsel, lit up only with the love and honour of distant friends and a few scattered communities of thoughtful men and women who can hardly be called a Church. The elder brother mounts on the top of the wave of Catholic reaction, and becomes a foremost pillar of a vast religious organisation. The younger brother leads a far-reaching movement of thought which is destined in one form or other to undermine the very foundations of that Church; he ends in obscurity and with hardly any personal following or influence. Yet the Cardinal represents only a discredited Past, and Francis did something to bring us nearer to a Greater Future.

In mental activity--undoubtedly in mental versatility and culture—Francis very much surpassed the Cardinal. There can be no question that, in learning and variety of gift, the two cannot be placed on the same level. The central ideas of the Cardinal's philosophy are to us so wild and incongruous that we can only account for them as intellectual "faults" (in the geologic sense) —abysmal fractures produced by a truly "seismic" act of the will. The philosophy of Francis (little as we share it) is that of a logical and acute mind. In poetical, literary, and polemical gifts, the Cardinal had a great superiority. He was a master of a style that had hardly any equal in his time. He was a brilliant controversialist, a subtle fencer, a splendid rhetorician,

and a most enthralling preacher. By these popular gifts he has blinded the opinion of his contemporaries to his extravagant hallucinations and passionate defiance of common-sense and coherent thought. In coherent thought—the very foundation of an intellectual leader—Francis Newman was much superior to his brother. Yet our distrust of Catholic sophistry need not induce us to deny that the Cardinal lived and died a powerful religious force in his age; and that the apostle of Theism, having done much to start an important, but evanescent phase of thought, lived to see his early work almost forgotten, and left at his death little enough which is likely to come to fruit in the future.

But the inferiority of Francis Newman to the Cardinal as an influence over his generation, is not to be accounted for solely by the great superiority of his brother as rhetorician and writer. That is but half the truth. There was a moral superiority also in the Cardinal—a force of character, an organic quality of brain. He had the synthetic genius in a high sense; whilst Francis, with all his really great analytic powers, had no synthetic genius at all. His learning and his enthusiasm, breaking forth in fifty sides at once, ended in becoming dispersive and dissolvent, for want of a social and philosophic centre to give it organic unity and concentration of active purpose. The Positivist tendency is all against a narrow specialism: its whole scheme of education and culture is for a truly encyclopædic combination of solid knowledge. But then a variety of special studies, without an adequate synthesis, necessarily ends in dispersion; and dispersion means unprofitable erudition and waste of effort. A true synthesis—that is, a dominant social and intellectual philosophy, or in other words a systematic religion—is an indispensable condition for giving to a multiplicity of acquirements either permanent or efficient results.



Had not Francis Newman a religion of his own?—it will be said. A religious *idea*—a grand and spiritual ideal of his own—he had. A systematic and organic social religion he had not. This is not the place to argue again the whole theory and practice of what is called "pure Theism." To put it shortly, pure Theism means pure Self. It may be, if the believer is a pure and lofty spirit like Francis Newman, it may be an elevating ideal. But each mind makes the ideal for itself, and must make it differently, and colour it by his own nature and mind. Pure Theism, without Church, or history, or organisation, or Scripture, or accepted body of scientific belief and moral practice, can only mean for each of us: "What I think, what I admire." And the end of it is dispersion, change of front, vagueness, and pure Individualism.

A Church, a Scripture, a Creed, a religious organisation—these mean a solid accumulation of human knowledge and thought, a common practice, a standard and criterion of conduct and belief. And all these, from the point of view of practical progress, are a more solid foundation than are personal hypotheses, however beautiful may be the hypotheses, and however imperfect may be the creed or the Church. The Churches—whether they be based on the Law of Moses, or the Rock of Peter, or the Bible, or the Koran, or the Confucian Sacred Books, and however faulty each and all may be, the great organic Churches are, in a rude form, an adumbration of Humanity; and, in a very broken way, they are based on part of the great religious and intellectual stores of mankind. Pure Theism, whilst retaining as the one article of its attenuated creed the metaphysical hypothesis in its most transcendental, and therefore its least scientific and least human form, cuts itself adrift from historic filiation, from the accumulated experience and teaching

of our spiritual forefathers, and leaves each believer free to imagine for himself the nature of his God and the law of the Divine Will. A noble spirit, like that of Francis Newman, has a noble image of that Divine Will. An ignoble spirit fashions it after his own temper and his own lights. That is the danger of pure Theism.

The Religion of Humanity falls into line with the organic religions, having a great tradition, a systematic philosophy, and a working scheme of education and of conduct. It absorbs all that is true and social in the Catholic and other earlier systems; its creed is the established axioms of physical, moral, and social science; its cult is the education of the soul in all humane and demonstrable truths. Whilst recognising in pure Theism a refined and transitory aspect of the metaphysical stage, it watches with keen sympathy and reverent honour the passing away of one who, by a clear brain and fine nature, did much to free an earlier generation than our own from a worldly ecclesiasticism and the ignorant idolatry of a Book which had grown to be as much a hindrance as a help to spiritual life.



XII

CANON LIDDON

(1890)

THOUGH I can in no sense presume to call myself one of Canon Liddon's friends, it is quite true that I was his schoolfellow more than forty years ago. I was at Oxford with him, too; and, widely as our lines have led us apart since then, I have found from time to time an affectionate welcome from him; and, on my side, have never lost the impression left on my mind by his saintly youth and sweet graciousness of manner, even to those with whom he had least in common. As I am asked to do so, I will put down what I can remember of his early years, leaving entirely to others to speak of him as a man and as a priest. Yes, I sat beside Liddon more than forty years ago, in the Sixth at King's College School, for a year or two—about 1846-47. He was three years my senior: and the gulf that exists between fourteen and seventeen amongst schoolfellows is one not easily passed. But I sat in form next to him; and, as in the Sixth we did not change places, I was his daily companion.

I was fond of all sorts of games: he of none. I read all sorts of books: he had even then his own fixed line of thought and of study. He was much my

senior, and very old of his years, so there was no kind of school intimacy between us. He always seemed to me an elder brother, who wished the young ones were more serious. But, different though our interests and habits were, I always found him friendly, gentle, and considerate. What was Canon Liddon like as a boy of seventeen? Well, so far as I can remember, he was at seventeen just what he was at twenty-seven, or thirty-seven, or forty-seven—sweet, grave, thoughtful, complete. Others perhaps may recall growth, change, completeness, gradually coming on him in look, form, mind, and character. I cannot. To me, when I heard him preaching in St. Paul's, or heard him speak at Oxford of more recent years, he was just the same earnest, zealous, affectionate, and entirely other-world nature that I remember him at seventeen. The lines in his face may have deepened; the look may have become more anxious of late years. But, as a school-boy, I always thought he looked just what he did as a priest. There was the same expression of sweet, somewhat fatherly, somewhat melancholy interest.

He would reprove, exhort, advise boys as a young priest does in his own congregation. We expected it of him; and it never seemed to us to be in any way stepping out of his own business when he gave one of us a lecture or a sharp rebuke. We seemed to feel that this was what he was there for. He was entirely a priest amongst boys. I do not think he ever joined in any game or even looked on at a game; I am sure he never took part in the rough-and-tumble and horse-play common amongst boys; and I am certain he never returned a blow or a practical joke at his expense. Nor had he any occasion to do so; for neither blow nor horse-play was ever practised upon Liddon. There was, I fancy, a kind of silent understanding that to treat Liddon rudely, even without



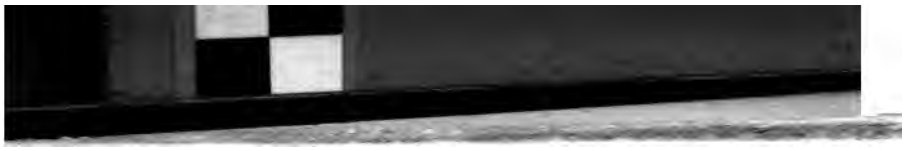
intending it, would be unmanly, like striking a priest with his robes on. I distinctly remember the howl of indignation which rose when a boy, mistaking him for another, once roughly struck him from behind in a rude jest. When he turned with a look of sorrowful expostulation, without a sharp word, we felt somewhat ashamed of our companion; who, I think, was carried off and judicially pommelled. I lived with my own family, and he lived in a boarding-house; so I cannot say much about his life out of school hours. But I remember a legend that, on the occasion of some violent outbreak in his house, a sort of barring out or breaking out which had been planned without his knowledge, Liddon interposed with his personal influence; and by remonstrance and advice induced the house to surrender or give up the plot, before much harm was done.

His school work was always well done and adequate; but I do not remember that he won prizes or cared to win any. His interests even then were entirely with theology, the new Church movement, and the preachers and teachers of the day. At seventeen, Liddon was just as deeply absorbed in Dr. Pusey and his work as he was at twenty-seven. It will be remembered that this was just the moment of the great Tractarian agitation. King's College School was essentially a school for Churchmen. We were all greatly excited by the religious questions of the day; and most of us were decided High Churchmen, as I was myself, to the extent of giving serious anxiety to our parents. But I can distinctly remember that, at the age of seventeen, Liddon had Church opinions, as definitely formed and on much the same lines, as he had at twenty-seven or thirty-seven. And his serious studies were as much given to theology, and his chief intimacies were as entirely formed on an ecclesiastical

basis, as ever they were in later life. In the whole course of my life, I have never known any one who appeared to me, over a period of more than forty years, so entirely the same from first to last:—the same in look, in manner, in mind, in nature. And in frankness I must add, that I have often wondered how one, who, as it seemed to me, had so little of elasticity, of breadth, and of growth, should have ever commanded so great an influence.

I knew him at Oxford, and he was always to me the same sweet, sympathetic, somewhat melancholy senior. He was taking his degree when I went into residence. By that time my High Church opinions had ceased to give anxiety to my friends, and I was slowly forming very different ideas of life, of man, of the world, and of religion. So that Liddon and I never discussed the things most dear to each of us, when we chanced to meet. When this happened, he was as sweet and as sadly affectionate as ever. And, though I followed his career with interest, admiration, and, I confess, not a little wonder, I thought it hopeless to try to get him to look at my point of view with interest, or even with patience; though he would always look at the holder of it with kindly good-will. Long before we had reached that period, I had come to feel that unless our philosophy and our science are right and clear, everything else will be wrong. But this was a position that we both felt it useless to discuss.

We met from time to time; I never failed to admire his personal courteousness, friendly remembrance of old days, and sweetness of manner, even in the case of the deepest antagonism of thought. I used to meet him during the trial of *Essays and Reviews*, and it would be difficult to imagine greater antagonism of view than his and mine upon that subject. And meeting him in a first interview with



a Jingo newspaper editor during the height of the controversy about Turks, Bulgarians, and Servians, I could not fail to admire, as we all did, his gentleness, courtesy, and entire command of himself. I abstain from saying one word about his opinions, as to which of course I have my own. I have taken up my pen only to utter a word of sorrow and of respect for the loss of one whom forty years ago I knew as a schoolboy, and who impressed all, even then, as a sweet and spiritual nature.

XIII

SIR CHARLES COOKSON

(1906)

On the 3rd of February died one of the original authors of *International Policy*, who was, in his earlier years, associated with the older body of Positivists. The *Times* of 5th February contained a full account of the long official career of Sir Charles Alfred Cookson, K.C.M.G., and C.B., who graduated in honours at Oxford in 1855, as an Exhibitioner of Oriel College, and, after serving in the War Office, was appointed, in 1868, the Vice-Consul and Judge of the Consular Court at Constantinople. He served as Special Commissioner at Athens in 1870, and at Cyprus in 1878, and was Consul and Judge in Egypt from 1874 to 1897. Both in Egypt and after his retirement in England, he took an active part in organising many charitable and public institutions—the Victoria Home for Nurses, the Sailors' and Soldiers' Institute, the Public Library and the Sanitary Board in Alexandria, and in London—the Hospital for Children, the Charity Organisation Society, and the Smoke Abatement Society. On his retirement, after thirty years of public services, both in a diplomatic and a judicial capacity, he was knighted by Lord



Salisbury. He died at his house in Chelsea in his seventy-sixth year.

To the writer the memory of Charles Cookson will ever be dear, as the oldest of his friends, dating from his school fellowship at King's College in 1846, and for his high moral and intellectual influence continued unabated for sixty years. Older than myself by a year or two, he led me in my boyish days to care for poetry, philosophy, and religion. With Henry Parry Liddon, the late Canon of St. Paul's, we were all very High Churchmen, and Cookson was what in those days was called a Puseyite. Together we attended St. Margaret's, Wells Street, high ritualist services, until my parents feared I was being led to Rome. In poetry Cookson led the way in devotion to Shakespeare, which I enjoyed as a dramatist, whilst he insisted on his supreme greatness as a poet. His own passion was for Wordsworth, with whom he had a family connection, and whose poems he knew from end to end. Like many a boy of fourteen, my own taste was rather for Pope and Byron. Many a literary battle did we have in time that ought to have been given to Thucydides and Cicero over the poetic value of the *Excursion* or the *Dunciad*. He and I went up together to Oxford and took our degree about the same time. During his official life abroad, we kept up active correspondence and met in his long vacations in Europe, and I visited him in Alexandria, whilst he was still busy with his consular and judicial work.

The feature in his history which specially concerns me here is that Charles Cookson was the first to introduce to us in our undergraduate days at Oxford the knowledge of Auguste Comte. It was in the year 1851 that he brought me the work on Positivism by Littré, and urged me to master it, and also the

estimate of Comte's philosophy in Mill's *Logic*. In 1851, of course, Comte's religious scheme was not framed, and the *Politique* was not written. I have no doubt that Cookson was the earliest Oxford undergraduate to make a serious study of Comte. I am not prepared to say that he ever accepted Comte's later system, though he continued to read and consider the whole of his philosophical writings. Nor do I think that Cookson ever abandoned the essential principles of the faith in which he had been trained from boyhood, and in which as a young man he had been an ardent believer. But his philosophical power and his immense reading prevented him in manhood from following the steps of our older schoolfellow, H. P. Liddon, who soon, at Christ Church, became Dr. Pusey's most prominent lieutenant.

When seven of us, with Dr. Richard Congreve as leader and editor, undertook to write a collective volume of Essays in order to treat International Relations on a systematic basis of morality and the supreme interests of Humanity as a whole, I induced Cookson to write on British relations with Japan. Dr. Bridges treated "China," Professor Beesly took "The Sea," E. H. Pember treated "India," and I took "France." Cookson gave a great deal of study to the then unknown history and character of Japan, and produced an essay of much interest and useful learning. When the volume was reissued many years after in a new edition, Cookson considered that his position as Consul, involving diplomatic as well as judicial duties of a very critical international kind, precluded him from taking part in a work which certainly took very decided sides in many keenly contested political problems, and usually opposed all existing official forms of policy. The omission of his essay on Japan was of the less importance, inasmuch as



in the intervening years the whole situation and character of Japan had been so completely transformed. Charles Cookson will long be remembered by all who came in contact with him as a conscientious public servant, an indefatigable student, as a high-minded citizen, and an affectionate friend.

XIV

SIR JAMES KNOWLES

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1908)

THE circle of Sir James Knowles' friends was so singularly wide, and the esteem and affection with which in a long and active life he was held by his intimates have been so fully described by others, that I will confine my remarks in the few pages that his successor kindly offers me to the story of his brilliant success as secretary and founder of the Metaphysical Society, and again as founder and Editor of the *Nineteenth Century*.

It is one of the most cherished memories of my literary life that I can look back to my own fellowship with that remarkable Society from the first, and also that for thirty-three years, from 1875 downwards, I can recall the kind and continuous consideration I enjoyed from James Knowles, as Editor first of the *Contemporary Review*, and then as Editor and proprietor of the *Nineteenth Century*.

My whole literary career for all that period has been closely bound up with these two organs of thought, and a large part of my own published works consists of studies that wholly or in part first came before the public as contributions to the periodicals



which were directed by James Knowles. In some sense he has been in literature my sponsor, however much he often differed from my utterances, which he not seldom called in others to combat or qualify. And it is a melancholy satisfaction to me, at the request of those he leaves to sorrow for him, that I seem called on to speak a few last words over his open tomb.

It is sober truth that during the twelve years of its activity, from 1869 onwards through the 'Seventies, the Metaphysical Society exercised a definite influence on the development of philosophical and religious thought, the indirect consequences of which are still to be traced. The idea, which Knowles and Tennyson started in 1868, was to bring face to face competent exponents of diverse theological and metaphysical schools in a friendly symposium, where the crucial axioms of their respective systems of creed and doctrine could be tested with the freedom of a scientific society. As the Royal Society opened an arena where new inventions and physical discoveries could be examined and analysed by past-masters in the natural sciences, so it was proposed to test and argue the validity of the new ideas which lie *inter apices* of moral and metaphysical science. The ultimate canons of Metaphysics are practically the *data* of Theology; and indeed it was at first designed to found a Theological Society. Froude declared that it would be marvellous if the new Society hung together for a year. But the Laureate more happily reminded him that modern science had taught us "how to separate light from heat." The Laureate was the better prophet. Some brilliant flashes of light were evolved with a minimum of heat, even when Cardinal Manning and Father Dalgairns came to hand-grip with Huxley and W. K. Clifford, when Ruskin or Abbot Gasquet met the two Stephens.

An excellent account of the Society was written by Knowles and R. H. Hutton, editor of the *Spectator*, and appeared in the Review in August 1885. The list of the members there given includes the names of Tennyson, Gladstone, Dean Stanley, Cardinal Manning, Huxley, Tyndall, Ruskin, Froude, Maurice, Martineau, Seeley, Bagehot, John Morley, Clifford, Frederick Pollock, Mark Pattison, John Lubbock, and Mr. A. J. Balfour. And the catalogue of the papers read and discussed ranges from the theory of Causation, of a Soul, of God, Death, Immortality, Miracle, the Will, Matter, Force, the Absolute, the canons of Proof, Things-in-themselves, and Intuitive faculties. To put it shortly, most of the best-known thinkers and controversialists of the 'Seventies were represented, from ultra-montane Catholicism to materialist Monism. And all the primary ideas of philosophy and theology were more than once argued and tested.

The papers read at the Society, together with critical debates in reply, frequently appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, of which Knowles was editor, and then in the *Nineteenth Century* Review, which he founded in 1877 and edited down to his death. For a short time indeed this Review was almost the literary organ of the Metaphysical Society; and of the sixty-two members of the Society there were few who, at one time or other, have not appeared as contributors to the pages of the Review. The rule of *signed* articles, by writers specially competent to treat the particular subject, has been uniformly followed. And every side of every question has been admitted, with the guarantees of personal responsibility of a known writer and adequate knowledge to treat the matter with fairness. One very interesting form of discussion was, I think, started by Mr.



Knowles, unless my memory betrays me on a suggestion of my own—viz. a *Symposium*, *i.e.* a succession of short papers by various writers from different standpoints criticising the opening paper and those which followed it. This original form of magazine-writing had for a time a deserved success.

With the dissolution of the Metaphysical Society in 1880, it ceased to furnish material for the Review, which for twenty-eight years has kept up the variety of its topics and the wide range of writers which were the distinguishing marks at its founding. It grew to be a literary power in the New World as well as in the Old; and has exercised a very striking influence not only on periodical literature but on liberal thought.

In a few pages it is impossible to relate the story of a career of editorship of more than thirty years, with its multiplicity of interests, causes, and topics, and its singular list of eminent contributors. None know so well as his earliest colleagues in this task how entirely the result was the work of the energy, the boldness, the versatile tact, and the genial sympathy of the English Brunetière, Sir James Knowles.

XV

HERBERT SPENCER

(1904)

By the unanimous voice of English as well as foreign thought, Herbert Spencer was the most prominent English philosopher of the nineteenth century. It is, indeed, welcome to those who profoundly honoured his life and his genius, and who have never spared their hearty appreciation of his character and his achievements, to witness the general and spontaneous agreement with this judgment. It is a striking testimony to the power over men still exercised by a noble life of devotion to social duty, as it witnesses also to the ascendancy of an original and real philosopher in a world so saturated with every form of specialism. We who have never hesitated to express our sympathy and admiration for his work in the many sides of it wherein we could join him with heart and soul, as also our divergence in those where we could not follow him, are free to speak without hyperbolic encomium or guarded qualification as we note the close of a great career.

The story of his life has been one of almost unparalleled devotion to his vast task. The annals of British philosophy can hardly present a similar instance



of laborious perseverance in a sphere where no profit and very scanty honour is to be won, under external difficulties so great, and, for the whole of his early life, in the face of discouragement and neglect so oppressive. Herbert Spencer often published his reasons "for dissenting from the philosophy of M. Comte." But he did not dissent from Comte's ideal of a great life: "*une pensée de jeunesse exécutée dans l'âge mûr.*" The philosophic detachment from all the things that ordinary men love and pursue was entirely the same in the English and in the French philosopher. Neither fortune, nor ease, nor weak health, nor society, nor fame, nor family, nor friends were ever able to withdraw Herbert Spencer from the fulfilment of his great and complicated task. His reward has been that he, almost alone of modern philosophers, has achieved all that he purposed, and perhaps all which he was capable of completing.

In other writings I have dealt with the Synthetic Philosophy of Spencer in a more detailed and specific way. It is sufficient for the moment to call attention to the characteristic feature of it, a feature which all judges alike have noted, and which all have praised. Spencer stands out amongst all English philosophers since Bacon, in that he deliberately set himself to frame a *Synthesis* of knowledge, that is, a system whereby a real concatenation of all our scientific and moral ideas could be harmonised. To Spencer Synthesis always meant an organisation of the sciences, the binding up of all special learning into an organic unity—vitalised in every nerve and pore of the encyclopædic mass by creative and omnipresent ideas, themselves inspired and ruled by one supreme conception. In this, Spencer stood alone with Comte. The Synthetic philosophy is (in Britain) unique. No British philosopher but Bacon has conceived anything

of the kind. Preposterously unlike Bacon as Spencer was in character, in life, and in brain (he was even in violent contrast with Bacon), his critics at home and abroad are continually comparing him with Bacon by reason of the encyclopædic nature of their studies and ideals. In this they are right. Spencer is our one synthetic philosopher of the last century.

He certainly exaggerated Synthesis and overrated the potential range of any Synthesis. The synthesis of Comte is devoted to teach the impossibility of any Objective Synthesis of the Universe, and the necessity of limiting philosophy to a Subjective (*i.e.* an anthropocentric and geocentric) Synthesis of what Man can know and can do. But we can do full justice to the magnificent dream of a great thinker to construct a coherent Synthesis, or system of scientific and sociologic knowledge, and to the heroic courage with which Herbert Spencer sacrificed every earthly enjoyment and reward in the long struggle to complete his ideal. To see the whole literary and scientific world of Europe and America do homage to this devotion to Synthetic Philosophy gives new hope to those who feel all the barrenness and chaos involved in the endless wanderings of analytic specialism.



XVI

HERBERT SPENCER'S "LIFE"[1]

(1908)

It seems generally agreed that the authorised *Life* of our English philosopher forms a valuable, and indeed necessary, supplement to his *Autobiography*; and it is also agreed that a difficult task has been ably and conscientiously fulfilled by his literary executor.

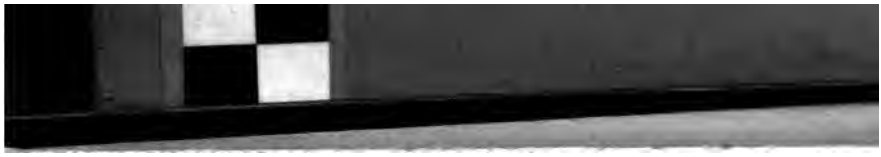
The *Autobiography* was not carried down beyond the year 1882, when Mr. Spencer was sixty-two; but he was destined to live to December 1903, with twenty-one years more of life, and a life of great activity until the last few years. Dr. Duncan's work, accordingly, down from chapter xvi., *i.e.* the larger part of his 600 pages, is distinct from the matter in the previous volumes of autobiography.

It completes, illustrates, and explains the view of the philosopher so elaborately drawn by himself in his own memoir; but it cannot be said that it gives us a different portrait of the man, or a new reading of his indefatigable life-work other than that which we had in the earlier book. It is a lasting satisfaction to all

[1] *Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer*, by David Duncan, LL.D. Methuen and Co. 8vo. 15s. 1908.

who love the progress of science and the cause of philosophic truth, to feel that, for our principal English philosopher of the nineteenth century, we now possess not only an absolutely exhaustive record of his entire mental and moral endowments, but also an unimpeachable account of the genesis of his ideas and (so to speak) the esoteric evolution of the whole Philosophy of Evolution. No philosopher of ancient or modern times has ever had his inmost brain and heart dissected for us with more patient insight. And no known system of philosophy has ever been so elaborately probed, discussed, defended, and expounded, or with greater care to leave no point unguarded and no misunderstanding uncorrected.

The degree of agreement in many fundamental doctrines between the Positivist School of thought and Herbert Spencer is so large, and the honour that I and my colleagues pay to his vast philosophic labour has been so amply displayed, that it is needless here to attempt any general estimate of his life-work. And, again, the essential points of difference, wherein we refuse to accept his guidance, have been so often explained by myself and by others that I have no mind to return to them now. I will only say that, after the lapse of nearly five years and careful study of the *Autobiography* and the *Life*, for my own part I entirely hold by all that I said, both in his honour as in criticism, in my *Herbert Spencer Lecture, 1905* (Clarendon Press. Pp. 30), as well as in my *Philosophy of Common Sense* (Macmillan, 1907. Pp. 344-405). Both these books of mine show how profound was the respect which I invariably felt for his character and ideals over an intimacy of more than forty years; and they prove how fairly and courteously I argued the cardinal grounds on which, as a follower of Comte, I felt bound to state disagreement.



The eighteenth chapter of Dr. Duncan's *Life* is mainly occupied with a controversy, at once philosophical and personal, between Mr. Spencer and myself in 1884-85. In the story of minute particulars of the affair, if Dr. Duncan thinks them worth recording, I have not the least complaint to make, and I am perfectly satisfied to leave candid minds to draw their own conclusions. In my *Philosophy* I reprinted without change the articles in which I criticised Spencer, and I adhere to every argument therein contained. I am confident that I have finally refuted the idea that the Unknowable can be made the basis of anything that can be called *religion*; and I also unmistakably showed that Mr. Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy had the fatal defect of leaving no place for religion in the true sense. No thinker of importance has accepted Mr. Spencer's religion of the Unknowable, and I think the new *Life* conclusively shows us that Mr. Spencer himself came to see at last that there was not so much between us as he thought.

Mr. Spencer made a real mistake (as he soon admitted) when he had my essays republished in America with refutations of his own in notes, without my knowledge and consent, and in violation of the copyright of myself as well as of the *Review*. Looking back after more than twenty years and reading in the *Life* my own letters (of which I had no copies), I cannot see that I remonstrated with needless warmth at what was in fact an unwarrantable literary offence. I should have been proud to publish a joint volume, provided I had been allowed to comment on his essays as he commented on mine—behind my back. It was a perfectly fair question to ask him: what was going to be done with the profits? It pointed to the hopeless dilemma in which his eagerness to engage in

controversy had landed him. And it was absurd to pretend that this very awkward question affected his "honour," or that I had dreamed of charging him with any thought of money in the matter. I well knew that most of his philosophic work was truly gratuitous, as indeed was my own. And I was quite entitled to point out to him that he had overlooked the question of money; which, as considerable profits were quite probable, would make a very embarrassing problem. The problem has never been solved to this day. The problem is this. Two well-known writers carry on a controversy over some months in a leading *Review*. One writer, without the knowledge of the other or of the *Review*, republishes all the essays of both writers, adding in footnotes hostile comments of his own upon his adversary's essays, but admitting no comments or replies to his own. The controversy excites much interest in two countries. The book sells, and profits are made. Both authors disclaim accepting any profits whatever. *Quaere*, what is to be done with the proceeds of sale?

I cannot accept the view of some over-nice people, especially amongst theologians, that controversy in any form is a mistake, if not positively wicked. Controversy on philosophical problems, fairly maintained by competent reasoners, is an invaluable instrument for reaching truth, and has been used by moralists and teachers with excellent effect from Aristotle and St. Paul down to Voltaire, Bentham, Mill, and Spencer. But the passion with which from boyhood till death Spencer flung himself to refute, and often to denounce, any opinion contrary to his own, uttered by any one in the most obscure place, was rather overdone. It comes out more in the *Life* than it did even in the *Autobiography*. It has enabled posterity more thoroughly to estimate his own nature and to under-



stand his ideas. But it gave rather a wrong impression of his force of character, and it certainly wasted too much of his time.

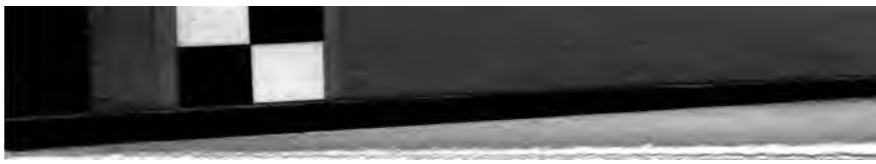
All the same, it is rather laughable for him or his biographer to complain of controversy and to talk about the "storms" with which he was beset. A thinker who for sixty years rejoiced to run counter to almost every current opinion, and who announced the most startling novelties of his own, need not have been surprised if those who differed from him expressed their dissent. Positivists have to live in a world of opposition and ridicule which they might truly call "a storm." Mr. Spencer was uniformly treated by us with profound respect. But when he gratuitously assailed Auguste Comte with every form of satire he was master of, he surely need not complain of "the storm" that fell on him when those who had devoted their whole lives to the synthesis of Comte attempted a respectful reply. Perhaps Mr. Spencer looked on Positivists as examples of the beast whom the French naturalist described as—*très méchant:—quand on l'attaque, il se défend.* The biographer seems to imply that it was unfair, and almost immoral, to criticise Spencer, because criticism would be sure to rouse him to waste his invaluable time in making answer.

It is a far more agreeable task to note the many fundamental points on which the synthesis of Comte and the Synthetic Philosophy of Spencer are in unison. And still more is it a source of pride to us to feel how entirely we were at one with him in his life-long contest with the vainglorious spirit of War and Aggression that is the curse of our age. Towards the close of his life Spencer was drawn towards us by our appeals for peaceful industry and inter-racial justice. I never forget, and he never forgot, how we worked together with Lord Hobhouse, John Morley, and the



Liberal M.P.'s of 1882, to form an Anti-Aggression League and to check that grasping ambition which led to so many crimes in Egypt, India, and South Africa.

But there is a further point of common interest which the *Life*, perhaps for the first time, makes clear to the public. With all his philosophic differences with Comte (and I have elsewhere shown that he greatly overstated these differences, owing to his own complete ignorance of Comte's own writings, and of almost all philosophical literature, ancient or modern), ultimately Spencer settled down into what was practically Faith in Humanity and the Service of Man. His letter to myself of December 4, 1892 (p. 324) conclusively shows this. He refused to call it *religion*: he said this was *ethics*. And it was in that sense that he repudiated the Religion of Humanity. As he truly wrote to me, "the difference is a matter of names." The letter of December 4 turned on my reply to Professor Huxley, now reprinted as essay eighteen in my *Philosophy of Common Sense* (p. 308). In that essay I showed Mr. Huxley that, in spite of his abusing Comte and repudiating his idea of religion, he was in essentials entirely with us in hoping for the future of humanity. Mr. Spencer, with these essays before him, announced substantial agreement. And I believe that both Spencer and Huxley differed from Comte on the problem of ethics and on the progress of human civilisation very much less than, in their controversial hours, either of these philosophers admitted or knew.



XVII

MUNICIPAL MUSEUMS OF PARIS

(*From the "Fortnightly Review,"* 1894)

THERE are not a few things in the municipal government of Paris which no sensible Englishman would desire to imitate in London—amongst these are the wholesale demolition of old streets, the monotony of sundry new streets, the passion for a geometric plan, and the habit of renaming public places every few years, if possible so as to convey an insult to Conservatives and priests. But there are certain things in the municipal organisation of Paris which are a model for the civilised world to follow, and which must fill Londoners with wonder and envy. Amongst these are the fine historical and artistic foundations of the city, the historical Museum and Library, the educational institutions, and the noble Municipal Hall, now, we hope, finally completed.

There are at least two institutions which London may be said pre-eminently to need, and which have now been carried out in Paris with extraordinary energy and skill. The first of these is an adequate Council Hall and offices; the other is an adequate historical Museum, a scientific history of the city, and an historical Library, specially devoted to the

antiquities of London, answering to the Musée Carnavalet of Paris. For London the difficulty arises from the double government, the mischievous survival of the old "City" in rivalry with the new city one hundred times larger. This nuisance is now in a fair way to be ended—a fact which makes it all the more urgent to consider the want of a fit municipal building and local institutions worthy of the amalgamated city—the richest and most vast in the world.

In the Guildhall, as yet monopolised by the effete Corporation of Lord Mayor and Aldermen, London has, it is true, a hall which in antiquity, scale, and historic traditions is worthy of it, were it not disfigured by vile adjuncts and mean ornaments. But the Guildhall is a mere hall, and offers no facilities for such offices as would be needed for an united London government. Whether the Guildhall could be ultimately incorporated with a fitting municipal building, whether it stands on a suitable and central site, are matters which we need not now consider. What is certain is, that the offices at present connected with the Guildhall are hardly worthy of the old Corporation of London, and would be utterly unworthy of the new Corporation of London, as it is to be, were it not that the present London County Council Buildings are even more glaringly unworthy, inconvenient, and discreditable to our colossal and wealthy city.

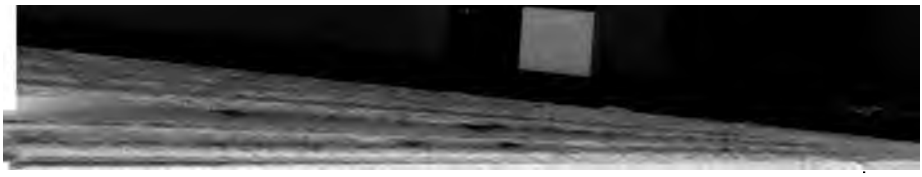
The Museum and Library at Guildhall are creditable institutions, but neither of them is specially devoted to London and its history, and they cannot be compared for a moment with the immense collection of the Musée Carnavalet; and though the old Crypt is interesting as an architectural relic of the fifteenth century, its vaults form a most insufficient place to house historical objects for public exhibition. London,



as soon as it is finally amalgamated and reorganised, will need a new City Hall and offices, and it ought to have a special Museum and Library for the history of London, and an authoritative history such as that of Paris. Paris now possesses these in a form more perfect and complete than any city of Europe ever had. And, using the experience of some recent visits, I propose to say something of the Hôtel de Ville of Paris, and of its adjunct, the Musée Carnavalet.

The Hôtel de Ville, rebuilt since 1871, on the site and on the lines of the beautiful old building of François I., is unquestionably one of the most noble palaces in Europe, with a history that accords with the history of the city. The Hall of the Corporation of Paris has had its seat there for some five centuries and a half, ever since Etienne Marcel, the year after the battle of Poitiers, bought the old Maison de Grève, as part of his vast schemes for the defence, enlargement, and reorganisation of the city. It is a fitting tribute to one of the most extraordinary men whom Paris ever produced, to have raised under the Hall which he founded the fine equestrian statue of the famous Provost of the Merchants. The building, which was begun on this spot in the time of François I., was one of the earliest and one of the most exquisite of all the Renascence palaces of France; and, as completed under Henri IV., it had no superior in its own style in Northern Europe.

The history of the gradual development of the original building over a period of more than three centuries from François I. to Louis Napoleon, its size being increased eight- or ten-fold without its first design and character being destroyed, is certainly one of the most interesting episodes in modern architecture; but it is too intricate and technical to be explained without plans and illustrations. The five centuries of



Parisian history from the wild times of Etienne Marcel to the wilder days of the Commune and the conflagration of May 1871, centre round this typical building, and make the Place de Grève as memorable a spot as any in Europe. As every one knows, within the last thirty years of the nineteenth century the Hôtel de Ville has been entirely rebuilt, on an even grander scale, and with more elaborate ornamentation; but in design it is a complete reproduction of the building as it stood in 1871, with certain modifications, and, as many believe, with decided improvements.

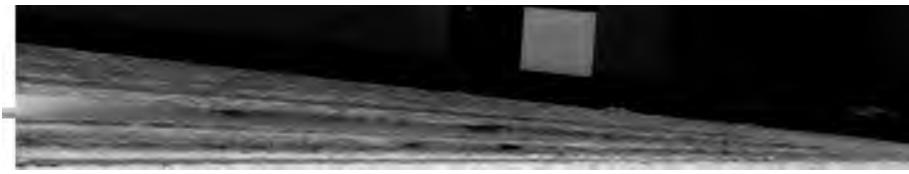
Mr. P. G. Hamerton, in his most judicious and beautiful book, *Paris in Old and Present Times*, does not hesitate to call the Hôtel de Ville in its first freshness of 1883, "the most perfectly beautiful of modern edifices"; "the fairest palace ever erected in the world." To many eyes, the mellowed tone of ten years is a gain, and that of a hundred years will perhaps prove a greater gain still. Many will be ready to agree that, as it stands completed, it is the most successful and interesting building that has been built in Europe in the nineteenth century. The exquisite material and workmanship, the refinement and delicacy of its parts, the ingenuity of its composition, its noble site and perfect appropriateness, make it a source of constant delight to a cultivated observer. To count it as perfect or worthy to rank with the best buildings of a great age—even with such a palace as the original Louvre of Pierre Lescot, or Inigo Jones's original design for Whitehall—is a very different thing.

If we imagine the existing building without its vast wings, *i.e.* as it was in the time of Louis XIII., it would be an edifice of singular grace and just proportion. But then it would be less than one-fifth of its present size, and in no sense a great palace at all. As it now stands, we cannot but notice that it is a



vast superstructure, or *annexe* to an exquisite centre. And, since the huge annexed wings have two stories besides the roof, while the central block was but one story, the enormous wings designed in the present century overtop and overload the central block designed in the sixteenth century. The addition has been made with signal skill, but we cannot help seeing that the building is the result of two distinct ideas, and that a lovely original gem has been converted into an imposing pile. But even so, how bright, graceful, and harmonious a mass does it appear, glittering like marble in the summer sun, as if it had risen purified from all its sombre memories—the most artistic achievement in stone of the nineteenth century.

But I have no wish to venture on the field of art—a ground where one is apt to be assailed by the professors of plaster and brick—*genus irritabile structorum*—my present purpose is to say a word for the civic appropriateness of the Hôtel de Ville. As Paris has not grown out westwards and northwards quite like London, but as the Cité is still its practical centre, the Hôtel de Ville is perfectly well placed on the historic site it has held for five centuries and a half. No site in Paris, except that of the Louvre, is superior, and very few sites anywhere in Northern Europe are equal to it. But when we examine the building in detail, we notice that it forms an immense historical museum. It is covered with statues, names, and dates which recall every incident in the strange history of Paris. No one will say that the statues are all works of art, or that all the men commemorated are statesmen or heroes. But how completely it puts to shame the decorations of our London Guildhall, with the gingerbread portal of Dance, the tomfoolery of Gog and Magog, and the monument of Lord Mayor Beckford. The Hôtel de Ville of Paris is at least a



serious attempt to raise a historic monument to the memory of the actors in the fierce communal life of Paris. Our Guildhall reeks of Jingoism and turtle soup.

Within, this vast building, which houses, it is said, in its various offices four thousand officials, has been made a museum of modern art. Those who care may retort that the art is melodramatic, which some of it undoubtedly is. But it is the best that France to-day can produce, and it may fairly be doubted if the rest of Europe could produce as good. Certainly some of the sculpture could not be equalled out of France, and several of the mural decorations in colour put to shame what has hitherto been attempted amongst us. Some hundred works in sculpture—groups, reliefs, statues, busts, caryatides, chimney-pieces—are by Barrias, Gautherin, Mercié, Dalou, Guillaume, and Falguière. Of mural decorations in colour there will be ultimately more than two hundred distinct pieces by such painters as Puvis de Chavannes, J. Lefebvre, Cormon, Maignan, Dagnan-Bouveret, Laurens, Gervex, Cazin, B. Constant, Besnard, Rixens, Humbert, and Bonnat. The idea of the Hôtel de Ville decorations apparently is to make the building a museum of modern art, a civic Luxembourg gallery, the prize of the aspiring sculptor and painter.

It is easier to point out the weaknesses of these works than to show how France, or even Europe in these *fin de siècle* days, is likely to get any better. There is no doubt a good deal of jobbery and favouritism in the selection of the artists, and not a little of vulgar *réclame* in their productions. But such is the curse under which Art existed in this closing decade of the century. In the meantime there are some interesting experiments in mural decoration. Puvis de Chavannes, Humbert, Lefebvre show interesting designs; and at



least there is the merit of variety of methods in search of some higher type. It is now the fashion to execute these works, not in true fresco on plaster, but in a preparation of wax painted on canvas. By this means the pictures are movable and can be exhibited in the Salon before they are set *in situ* on the walls. The device has some advantages in that the picture can be preserved from destruction, and is not liable to the decay inevitable to plaster. But though it escapes the shiny surface of an oil painting, it never attains the peaceful radiance of true fresco; and the practice of Salon exhibition introduces a new horror and fresh extravagance even into the absurd art of ceiling painting. If Puvis de Chavannes has come nearer to mural decoration than his compeers in Europe, it may safely be affirmed that Bonnat in his "Triomphe de l'Art," designed for the ceiling of the Salon des Arts of the Hôtel de Ville, and exhibited in the Champs Elysées Salon, fulfils one's ideal of the Degradation of Art by extravagance, vulgarity, noise, and general inanity.

Still, after counting all the failures and all the absurdities, one cannot deny that the Hôtel de Ville shows a determined effort to place the civic government of Paris in one of the noblest palaces of modern times, which shall be at once a municipal Heroön, or monument of civic patriotism, and a museum of modern art, in all its forms, plastic and graphic. The purpose, the effort is right; the execution, if faulty, takes its faults from the age. It has not been done as it was done at Athens, or Venice, or Florence; but it has been done far more worthily than it has been done elsewhere in modern Europe. And if we take the Hôtel de Ville as a whole, inside and outside, its architecture and its decorations, its sculptures, paintings, fittings, and ornaments, it must be said—

not only to put to shame Dance's dismal Mansion House and the make-shift offices where the County Council governs London—but even to hold its own at least on equal terms with that on which England has lavished such vast sums and such infinite labour (alas! how often in vain!)—the Houses of Parliament at Westminster.

It seems quite natural to Englishmen to have their national Parliament in the most sumptuous palace their artists can raise, and to fill it with works of decorative art from pinnacle to pavement. A healthy instinct tells them that such lavishness stimulates patriotism, and makes government more effective by embodying the seat of authority with impressive symbols. Whatever our party politics and our economic creed, all thinking men amongst us are satisfied within reasonable limits to accept such public magnificence, however much we grumble at the form which it takes. In Paris this public magnificence is the special delight of civic patriotism. And, when we have a civic patriotism in London, it will need some similar expression. Londoners are fast learning this lesson of municipal patriotism; and they cannot too early study the example in this matter of the city of Paris, which places its urban government in a building that reflects and concentrates the beauty of their beautiful city, and forms at once a museum of art and an historic monument.

The Municipal Council of Paris, which has its seat in the Hôtel de Ville, is charged with education as well as care of the streets, and as such has charge of many subordinate institutions, and has sundry affiliated departments. One of the most characteristic of these is the Museum and Library, now seated in the Hôtel Carnavalet, in the *Marais* quarter near the *Place des Vosges* (old *Place Royal*). This is now



devoted to a museum of monuments, pictures, sculptures, and other works relating to the history of Paris in all ages. It begins with the Stone Age in the basin of the Seine, and goes down to the present day. Everything of pre-historic, Gallic, Gallo-Roman, Roman, Gothic, Renascence, Revolutionary, and Modern art found in Paris, and illustrating the history of the city, is here collected. It contains a collection of pictures of Paris at various ages, maps, plans, models, and other works, showing the aspect of the city at various ages from the sixteenth century to the present day. By these it is easy to get an exact conception of Paris from the time when it was a fortified feudal city, and of its gradual development to the city we see to-day. These pictures are in great measure the sources from which M. Hoffbauer made his ingenious pictures for his great work, *Paris à travers les Ages*. His large oil picture—"Paris under Henri III., in 1588"—as seen from the tower of the Louvre, is singularly instructive. One is glad to hear that M. Hoffbauer's original drawings have been procured by the Museum, and are about to be specially exhibited. It is seldom safe to trust in an imaginary "restoration." But Hoffbauer is a learned antiquarian as well as an artist, an engineer, an architect, and an accomplished historian. His views of old Paris will not only bear very close study, but are singularly vivid presentations of the ancient city in all its phases.

The Hôtel Carnavalet is, after the Louvre and the Cluny museums, the most interesting and pleasant of the public galleries. The accident that it is situated far from the quarters of fashion, tourists, and students, and also that it is a recent acquisition of the city, has made it so little frequented that, to all but a small fraction of visitors, its very existence is

unknown. Yet no more delightful relic of old France survives in the busy quarter which was the "quartier St. Germain" of the François and the Henris in the sixteenth century. The château itself is a link between the Renascence of the age of Pierre Lescot and the literary society of the Grand Monarque; so that both the objects exhibited in the Museum, and the books and engravings of the Library, gain a special savour of their own from being housed in a rare historic palace.

The Hôtel was built for Jacques des Ligneris, President of the "Parlement," by Pierre Lescot and Bullant, in 1550, and the façade was adorned with some large and beautiful reliefs by Jean Goujon. In 1578 it was sold to Françoise de la Beaune, wife of François de Kernevenoy, or Kernevalec, a Breton, who had been governor of Henri III. From them it has retained the name of Carnavalet, taken to be a euphonious corruption. The only part of the original building is the central block facing the entrance, and the ground floor of the three sides of the court, including the portal of entrance from the street. Ducerceau continued the work of Pierre Lescot; and Mansard, in 1660, transformed it by adding the eastern façade on the street, and raising a new story on the original ground floor of the three sides. The work of the seventeenth century is greatly inferior to that of the sixteenth; but it has in no way destroyed its peculiar grace. Madame de Sévigné leased and inhabited the Hôtel from 1677 till her death in 1696. The rooms used by her and her daughter, Madame de Grignan, the hardly worthy recipient of the famous letters, are now devoted to the Library and the collection of prints. They retain their original form, decoration, and panelling. Here the student, by the courtesy of the director and the librarian, may pass



delightful days of study, surrounded by portraits and mementos of the time, and can almost cease to believe that two hundred years have passed since the greatest of letter-writers used to sit in the same room with the same ornaments, labouring at her daily task of love, or receiving the brilliant literary society of her age.

It is indeed a singular combination of good fortune and good taste that has placed the municipal museum and library of Paris in a building which is itself a most instructive school of architecture, a fascinating relic of the ancient city, and the historic seat of one of the chief intellectual movements of the great age of Louis XIV. It would not be possible to find for London so appropriate and interesting a building, even if the materials of such a municipal museum and library were already at hand. Something of the kind might have been done, if the Metropolitan Board of Works, when it acquired old Northumberland House, had converted it into an historical Museum and Library of London antiquities, and had placed therein such objects and work of art and literature as may now be seen in the Guildhall, South Kensington, and in sundry other collections and libraries. But then London would have had to forgo its Grand Hotel and the Avenue Theatre.

The collections in the Museum show us types of civilisation from the age of the lake-dwellers, who founded some pile fastnesses in the broads of the Seine, down to our own times; and they serve to bring out first, that Paris was an earlier and much more important Roman town than ever was London, and next, that the city of Paris had no such break in its history as befell London after the departure of the Romans, and the decay of the Briton population until its resettlement by the Saxons.

From the age of the Roman conquest down to the Renascence there is a series of objects — tombs, sarcophagi, statuettes, reliefs, pottery, inscriptions, glass, bronzes, medals, coins, with fragments of carvings, doorways, finials, and statues from mediæval churches and buildings. From the middle of the sixteenth century until our own times there is a complete collection of paintings, drawings, sketches, plans, and engravings showing every chief building and every aspect of the city at successive epochs. "The Cemetery of the Innocents in the sixteenth century" (now the delicious square of the Fountain); the "Procession of the League in 1590"; the "Carrousel in the Place Royale in 1612"; the series of views by the two Raguenets, those of Callot, Chastillon, Demachy, and La Fontaine, and the engravings of Ducerceau, Israel Sylvestre, Callot, Pérelle, and Méryon, are of great interest to the historian, the archæologist, and even to the curious traveller.

The paintings, it is true, are not, like the engravings and etchings, of any artistic merit; but from their general precision and great number and variety, they form ample material wherewith to trace the gradual transformation of the Paris of Louis XI.—the gloomy, picturesque, squalid, romantic, feudal city, with its enormous wealth of noble pointed architecture and grand castellated fortresses—into the open, airy, symmetrical, Hausmannised city of boulevards and gardens, palaces and hotels, so delightful to the man of the world and so interesting to the man of culture. The history of this transformation, a process steadily continued for about three centuries and a half, is one of the most definite and suggestive episodes in modern history, and almost the central school wherein to study the development of the art of living and the art of building that Northern Europe affords. The city of



Chicago to-day is not an inexplicable fact—given enormous wealth, energy, and ambition. But the formation of a far more splendid Chicago on the Seine, on the lines and foundations and over the very structures of the Paris such as it is described by Victor Hugo in his *Notre Dame*, is one of the most complex and instructive chapters in the history of European civilisation.

As is natural, the strongest feature of the Carnavalet Museum is the collection of works of art, documents, and relics that illustrate the Revolution. This has been largely increased by the gift of the great collection of M. Alfred de Liesville, in 1881. There is hardly a single person named in the political movement from Marie Antoinette, Mirabeau, and Robespierre, down to Louis Blanc and Jules Michelet, of whom some likeness may not be found in the thousand pictures, engravings, busts, medals, and drawings in this collection. Nor would it be easy to find a single incident in the long struggles of 1789-1802, 1830, 1848, which is not here represented or illustrated by mementos. For the student of the Revolution the most diligent reading of all the authorities from Buchez et Roux or Berville et Barrière down to Von Sybel and Mortimer Ternaux, will find that he has failed to gain a vivid conception of the men and episodes of the time, till he has mastered the contents of the museum and library, with its portraits, drawings, documents, models, porcelains, relics, and various works of technical art. There is a rough but literal and contemporary sketch of the "Fête de la Fédération," or Gathering of the Federal Delegates at the Champ de Mars in 1790, which, carefully studied, may do much to correct the clumsy caricature that Carlyle has given us of a really singular event. However alien to English habits and tastes, it must have been a sight of extraordinary power

to impress those present; and it certainly produced a profound reaction on the provinces of France.

The Library, which now has more than eighty thousand volumes and seventy thousand prints, is an integral part of the Museum; but the collections have increased so much of late that it is contemplated to remove to another building the Library which now occupies the apartments of Madame de Sévigné. The contents of the Library relate to the history of Paris; and it is a great boon to those who are studying it to have in one set of apartments and with the facility of immediate reference every book, pamphlet, or illustration which relates to the subject, and to find at hand at a moment's notice fine impressions of the magnificent works of Ducerceau, Chastillon, Sylvestre, Rigaud, Pérelle, Viollet-le-Duc, Guilhermy, and Hoffbauer, the etchings of Méryon and Martial, and every known authority that can throw light on the history of the city. The Library is open daily to all comers; and the excellent librarian, with his courteous assistant, is ever ready to make the reader's task easy and pleasant.

The history of Paris has been more fully and elaborately written than perhaps that of any other city in the world, unless it be Rome. The histories begin with Jean de Jandan in 1323, and the latest is that of Hoffbauer, Fournier, and others—"*Paris à travers les Ages*—Aspects successifs des monuments et quartiers historiques de Paris depuis le XIII siècle jusqu'à nos jours. Par M. F. Hoffbauer, architecte. Texte par Ed. Fournier, Paul Lacroix, A. de Montaiglon, A. Bonnardot, Jules Cousin, etc. etc. etc., Paris. Firmin Didot, 1872-1882. 2 vols. folio." There is also a special historical society for Paris, the Société de l'histoire de Paris, founded in August 1874, which publishes annual volumes of research, and forms a



centre for the pursuit of the archæology of the city.

But the most important work is the great collection instituted by the Conseil Municipal in 1866, of which in 1894 more than thirty quarto volumes had been issued, many of them splendidly illustrated. This noble work contains the text, edited and annotated, of all the early histories of Paris from the fourteenth century, facsimiles from manuscripts and illuminations, plans and drawings, and a great body of researches on all the aspects of the city life and industry. A work of this kind can hardly be undertaken by private adventure. It is eminently a duty of some public authority. When I had the honour of serving on the London County Council, I desired to induce the Council to undertake a similar work for London; but, owing to the absurd limits which the Act has placed on the Council's expenditure, they had no power to devote a shilling to promote such a scheme. The Corporation of the City can and do undertake something of the kind. But the Corporation unfortunately do not represent London and cannot act for London.

It has often been suggested that the Municipal Government of London would do well to send over a small commission of experts to study the administrative system and municipal institutions of certain great towns in France and Germany, especially those of Paris and Berlin. Amongst the most striking lessons they would bring back would be a thorough examination and report on the Hôtel de Ville of Paris, its history and organisation, and the historical museums and libraries connected with it. It cannot be many years now before public opinion will insist on the united and reconstituted City of London having a Hall and Palace worthy of its vast resources and

gigantic tasks. And among the various undertakings which the new Council of the Old City will have to take in hand are an adequate Museum of London antiquities, a Library of London illustrations, and a comprehensive history of London in all its phases, and in all sides of its long and memorable annals.



XVIII

PARIS IN 1851 AND IN 1907

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1907)

My first knowledge of Paris was in the summer of 1851, in the days of the Second Republic, and during a visit to that city in May and June 1907 I was again struck by all the changes and contrasts in the aspect of things that fifty-six eventful years had brought about. It happened that on my way to Switzerland I was detained in Paris; and, as I was myself in practical quarantine and debarred from the society of my friends, I had to occupy my leisure in strolling about the streets, meditating on the enormous developments and ravages of half a century, giving a new study to all the museums, galleries, public institutions, and other "sights" which I fondly supposed I had exhausted twenty or thirty years ago. For some weeks I was just the "man in the street," the tourist freshly arrived in the "Ville Lumière"—"doing its shows" as if for the first time, a travelling Rip Van Winkle wondering at the new world upon which he had alighted.

I call it a "new world" because, although I first knew Paris in 1851, have visited it almost every year since, have lived in French families, made constant studies in its museums, and indeed twenty-one years

ago had "personally conducted" a large party from Newton Hall who spent a week there in June 1886, I had never quite realised the vast changes, additions, and improvements which twenty or thirty years have brought. Men long past middle life are loth to make a fresh study of a city they believe they know thoroughly; and at that age anything like "sight-seeing" is apt to be looked on as a folly and a nuisance. An irksome chance compelled me to undergo that *corvée* once more. And I can assure my contemporaries that unless they will keep up to date their knowledge of the topography, idiosyncrasies, and art treasures of Paris they will miss a great deal which is well worth knowing as well as seeing.

I had been often in France and had lived in French provincial families in the later years of Louis Philippe, so that when I came to Paris in 1851 I was quite at home with the people, the country, and the language. Looking back over the fifty-seven years since then, one is amazed by the enormous work of destruction and reconstruction which the third emperor completed, or left as a ruinous legacy to the Third Republic to complete. In half a century the *Haussmannisation de Paris* has made a spectacle of transformation greater perhaps than that of any city on this side of the Atlantic. Paris in 1851, at least within the inner boulevards, was substantially what Napoleon the First had made it or had designed to make it. The old boulevards looked to be what they were—the sites of the demolished ramparts of the city and fosse—shady with trees and broken into different architectural forms. None of the newer boulevards had been thought of—Strasbourg, Sebastopol, St. Michel, Haussmann, Magenta, Raspail, Malesherbes, Mont-Parnasse. I have seen them all in the making, and so too the Avenue de l'Opéra, de Breteuil, Kléber, Victor Hugo,



and scores of others, with at least one hundred great streets cutting through the tortuous old city as if by volleys of cannon balls.

Strolling about the city the other day I tried to conjure up again a vision of the city as I saw it in 1851—within the old boulevards a network of narrow, winding streets such as we see still round the Rue du Temple on one side of the river or about the Rue de Seine on the other; the Rue de Rivoli not yet rebuilt beyond the Louvre; the old historic houses once inhabited by men famous in history, literature, and art; the quiet corners with traces of feudal castles, splendid monasteries, and Gothic churches, grey and crumbling with encrusted saints and angels. I remember Notre-Dame still buried amid old buildings, and its magnificent façade in its antique carving yet unpolluted by the sacrilegious hand of the restorer. The Cité on the island was still what it had been for five or six centuries, a maze of old tenements and labyrinthine streets. And the inner bulk of the city looked as it had looked all through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries down to the Revolution. How little of this remains to-day! Old mansions, historic churches, picturesque streets, and sleepy impasses are all gone. Broad geometric avenues, roaring with huge motor and tram cars, have torn their path through them and swept the old remnants into oblivion.

Was this marvellous change a gain or a disaster? Thousands of rare specimens of mediæval work, scenes of many centuries of stirring events, street vistas, towers, and gables, dear to generations of etchers—all have gone and left not a wrack behind. A huge transformation of old Paris was inevitable if Paris was to remain the heart of modern France. In 1857 the population was about one million; with the new

suburbs, it is now almost three millions. This vast number could not be permanently cribbed and cabined in its old mediæval labyrinth. New lines of transit had to be made. We may accept the new outer boulevards, the avenues, and broad streets outside the *enceinte* of the eighteenth century. But nothing will reconcile me to the wanton destruction caused by the Boulevard St. Germain, the annihilation of the island Cité, and the pompous extravagance of the Avenue de l'Opéra. The Opera and its Avenue were one of the worst offences of the Empire—a monument of tasteless and insolent luxury. And the unfinished Boulevard Raspail is one of the evil examples of the mania for reconstruction and waste without real overriding necessity.

It is notorious that under the Empire the reconstruction of Paris was to a great extent a political and social device, and even more a corrupt speculation, a financial gamble. Paris, no doubt, had to be entirely revised. But it ought to have been done with one-third less of cost and half the destruction. In the result the municipal taxation has run up to the terrible amount of something like £4 : 10s. per head. Underground railways, tram-roads, motor omnibuses, motor cycles, automobiles, and every mode of conveyance do not suffice to supply the ever-increasing traffic, while they have made Paris the most difficult and dangerous of cities to the unwary man on foot. As these vast Noah's arks roar and thunder down steep and narrow streets, as a thousand motors tear about the broad Avenues and Places, as *taximètres* and cycles race round corners without warning, one needs a pair of eyes at the back of one's head and an eye over each ear as well as under the brow. But when all is said, it cannot be denied that the brilliant aspect of modern Paris is a perennial source of its wealth. And, though



I see little beauty in the Opera or the Grand Palais, I am bound to confess that the scene from the Hôtel de Ville to the Arc de l'Etoile offers far the most resplendent prospect that any city has ever produced since the Rome of the Antonines.

The point to which I seek to draw attention is the immense additions to the National Museums of Paris made in recent years, and the opening of a number of newly acquired collections, many of them even since the Great Exhibition of 1900. Within a generation, to a great extent within the present century, the public museums have been so greatly reconstructed and enlarged, and so many new museums have been acquired, that the judicious lover of art may find much of his work to do over again. The Louvre itself has been entirely rearranged and enlarged, and has received by bequest and purchase a series of splendid acquisitions which amount to a new museum. The Greek antiquities from Delphi are now shown together in excellent reproductions which make one envy a Government that can spare the necessary funds for excavations of surpassing interest. Why is England the only nation which is deaf to such appeals?

The Louvre has, I think, grown in a generation faster than our own National Gallery and British Museum. The additions to the Greek and the Asiatic collections are of great extent and importance. The new galleries named after Thiers, Thomy-Thiéry, Morgan, Rothschild, are all interesting and varied. The additions in the ground floor to the Mediæval and Renaissance antiquities, the new Della Robbia Hall on the side of the Seine, the new Carpeaux Hall on the Rue de Rivoli side, would occupy a busy day to study; and fresh works come in each season by bequest, purchase, gift, or loan. The new specimens of early Italian fresco, panel, and canvas in the *Salle*

des Primitifs, the reframing and rearranging of the magnificent Rubens and Van-Dycks in the special *Galeries Van Dyck* and *Rubens* are things which no traveller should fail to know, but which the tens of thousands who knew their Louvre ten or twenty years ago have never seen. The whole of the rearrangement of the picture galleries into French, Italian, Dutch, and English Halls, with the cabinets round the Rubens Gallery, are an immense improvement on the unscientific hanging which delighted the tourist, or worried the student, a generation ago.

The Museum of the Louvre, uniting in one our National Gallery, British Museum, and South Kensington, is so vast—we are told that it occupies some two hours merely to walk through the galleries without stopping—that many an ordinary tourist sees little more than half. And those who have not visited it carefully since 1900 have much to learn. The Adolphe Rothschild bequest is a study in itself. And few but experts, one fears, climb the stairs of the second story and see the collection of the French modern schools—the Corots, Millets, Daubignys, Diaz, Decamps and Rousseaus, and the bequest of Thomy-Thiéry in a gallery bearing his name (1902). It would be well worth any young painter's while to go to Paris simply to see these. If he would go from them to the Salon of the day, he would learn a lesson in the art of modern Decadence.

The Pavillon de Marsan—the North-Western angle of the Louvre, and the only part of it built under the Third Republic—now holds the Museum of Decorative Art; and at present it forms a distinct collection in the hands of a society, destined ultimately to pass to the State. Its paintings, sculptures, wood and ivory carvings, tapestry, enamels, medals, jewels, porcelain, engravings, and lace are too often over-



looked in the multiplication of art museums which Paris now presents to the tourist. Over and above the old State collections which every traveller believes that he knows, there are now added the wonderful Chinese and Japanese bronzes which M. Cernuschi bequeathed in 1895 to the City of Paris; the tapestries of the *Musée Galliera*; the Chinese and Japanese porcelains of the *Musée Guimet*; the house and designs of Gustave Moreau (1898); and the *Musée Victor-Hugo* in the Place des Vosges (1903), containing a remarkable store of works of art which testify how deeply the poet impressed his thought on the imagination of the nineteenth century.

Every tourist knows the Petit Palais, the Luxembourg gallery of modern art, the Cluny, and the beautiful Carnavalet Hôtel, the abode of Madame de Sévigné, with its immense collections of historic records of the City of Paris, its local and personal reminiscences. But few ordinary travellers realise the rate at which all of these are acquiring new works by bequest or purchase. Every time I visit them again I am struck by the growth. The Petit Palais (1902) is the property of the city, and is rapidly filling with modern paintings and sculptures. The Cluny and the Carnavalet have largely benefited by recent gifts, by the Rothschild family as well as from smaller collections. The Panthéon now has its wall decorations practically complete. Those of Puvis de Chavannes are admirable examples of true decorative art adapted to a classical building both in form and tone. Most of the others are noisy Academy pictures, theatrical in composition and strangely out of keeping with the building in which they stand. Nothing is worse than to thrust modern paintings on a cold semi-Roman fane. The Panthéon is not yet a success.

Over and above the permanent museums, Paris has

a set of temporary exhibitions in the season which I found an endless source of interest and study. The two great Salons in the Grand Palais with many thousands of pictures, statues, drawings, engravings, and gems — the portraits and manuscripts in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, the rearranged documents in the *Archives Nationales*, in the grandiose Hôtel de Soubise, the portraits of modern women in the delicious Château de Bagatelle, just acquired by the City of Paris (1904). As one viewed the portraits of the beauties and *grandes dames* of the last Empire one could see here and there an aged but distinguished lady surrounded by her grandchildren, looking at herself as she had appeared in the fashions of forty and fifty years ago. She no doubt admitted that fashion has improved. The acquisition of this graceful little Château and its sweet English park in the Bois du Boulogne has been one of the best prizes of the Conseil Municipal.

When one passes from the permanent collections of former days to the huge collections of contemporary art, the soul sinks within one at the spectacle of universal degeneration. Painting, sculpture, porcelain, jewelry, all forms of decorative art testify to the same decline. And it is a decline stamped with one vicious craze which has poisoned genius and skill of hand. That craze is the passion to do something *new*; something which may attract attention; startle, even if it disgust the public. The curse on modern life—the thirst for the *new*, the rage to get out of the old skin—is the blight on our literature, our art, our drama, our manners—even our morals. It is a passion without aim, or conviction, or feeling—a mere restless itch to get free from old habits and to get into something uncommon, it hardly matters what, if only it can announce itself as "unconventional." It is not to be



beautiful—indeed the beautiful in any form is "conventional"—rather it must be ugly, so long as the ugliness is unusual. It may be gross, absurd, horrible, obscene, tawdry, childish, so long as the older generations would have turned from it with anger or pain. If so, it is *l'art nouveau.*

One who remembers what French art was and has seen the Salons of the last fifty years must note a gradual descent. Not to speak of the painters and sculptors before the Third Empire, when one passes from the later French artists in the Louvre and the Luxembourg to the two Salons, what a contrast! What a fall! What a *pot-pourri*! Compare these contorted nudities, these bleeding ruffians, these acres of pantomime tableaux, with Ingres, Delacroix, Gérôme, Cabanel, Corot, Daubigny, Meissonier, Troyon, Millet, Pradier, Barye, Carpeaux—what a fall it is! No man of sense, of course, denies that there are still in France men who paint portraits full of life and colour, landscapes of truth, and now and then even of charm, men who can model the human figure with complete mastery, and almost everything except grace. There is no lack of skill of hand, industry, ambition, even a kind of perverse originality, in this cosmopolitan crowd of men and women who shout to us from four thousand canvases and pedestals to look and see how clever they are.

We do not care to see how clever they are. We do not desire to see things which no painter ever yet ventured to paint, and no sculptor ever thought of modelling, and no public ever yet submitted to be shown. We want to have things beautiful to look on, things which recall to us exquisite visions of all that is fair, pure, harmonious on this earth. And they ply us with scenes which are meant to be repulsive, which aim at being ugly, foul, or grotesque. Their

baigneuses and *odalisques* twist their naked bodies into shapes which are meant to combine nastiness with queerness. Horses are painted of ultramarine hue; seas are coloured vermillion; girls have lampblack on their cheeks. The painter says: "Take my word for it—I saw it so—we have no conventions now." There is one convention indeed, so ancient, so necessary, so universal, that its deliberate defiance to-day may arouse the bile of the least squeamish of men and should make women withdraw at once.[1]

There is no lack of pains, no want of cleverness, smart "brushwork" by the yard, and original ideas of the grosser type—the "model" standing, or sprawling, at ease and smoking a short pipe, a surgeon probing a patient's sore, the unmentionables of the dissecting room, of the rowdy studio, of the *Bouge-des-rats*—plenty of all this, provided it be at once novel and coarse. There are no doubt fine pictures, powerful heads, and pleasant *paysages* here and there on the interminable walls of canvas. But the impression left is that only one picture in a hundred seriously aims at giving us any sense of beauty, of delight in some unnoticed side of nature, harmonious blending of form and colour. The direct aim of ninety-nine pictures is to make us stop to look—if possible to give us a shock —*épater le bourgeois*—to amuse the vicious, to brutalise the innocent.

There are still great portrait painters in France; but what mere tradesmen's advertisements are most of the portraits on these walls. Vulgarity, *pose*, money, and swagger reign supreme. One would think that

[1] But I must veil my protest, as Gibbon says, in the obscurity of a learned tongue: Tam in pictura quam in sculptura, secundum consuetudinem illam de veteribus traditam, mos erat ne omnia muliebria veris formis nec veris coloribus monstrarent, sicut in natura videri possent. E contrario, pictores hodierni omnes corporis feminei partes nuda veritate depingere gaudent.



the modistes of the Rue de la Paix pay for these portraits of Madame X., to show what elegant "creations" their customers wear, what novelties in patterns and materials are now on view. The face of Madame X. seems a mere dummy, a clothes-horse, which the painter threw in gratis while he lavished his skill on robes, manteaux, laces, and jewels of which the shops hired him to make a sort of coloured fashion-plate. It is difficult to imagine real ladies masquerading as mere lady-assistants in a smart show-room.

And the men—what gross, gluttonous, insolent "gold-bugs" they look! Their heavy lips seem to smack of champagne and *pâtés de foie gras*; in their obese trunks one seems to hear the bullion ring; nine out of ten are painted with tobacco between their teeth. Realistic no doubt, but let us imagine Bellini's "Doge of Venice," or Vandyke's "Gevartius" with cigarettes as the typical motif. Advancing "realism" will one day perhaps paint its great men in the act of taking solace in some other natural function of the body. But in our age of apolaustic *abandon* tobacco is thought to give the guinea-stamp of manly dignity and noble bearing.

Sculpture has been the central French art ever since the days of Jean Goujon, Puget, and Houdon—nay, ever since the carved portals of Reims, Chartres, and Amiens. But now, alas! even sculpture is failing her. There is any amount of cleverness, knowledge, up-to-dateness. But the morbid love of the *new*, the real, the ugly has perverted it to base uses. A hideous old woman in a tattered skirt, with pendant dugs, and knotty claws, may be quite natural and real, but is not a subject for art in a life-size statue. Nothing can make a coal-heaver's broadbrim hat and corduroy trousers sculpturesque. And a modern gentleman in a silk hat and frock coat looks foolish in a group

surrounded by naked Graces and classical Virtues. There is cleverness still in the sculpture of to-day, but as high Art it is in decadence.

Let me fortify my indictment by the authority of one of the greatest of living sculptors. Dr. Rodin himself has just told us that all Art is in decadence. M. Rodin is a man of genius, of great gifts, and daring imagination. But I make bold to say that Rodin himself is a typical example of this decadence, and has done as much to teach and promote decadence as any man living. His extraordinary powers and his originality have made him the high priest and apostle of decadence. In his desire to attain to something new in his art, he has desperately plunged into the negation of art. In his passion to avoid "conventions" he has revelled in sheer awkwardness and brutality. And yearning to get rid of prettiness, smoothness, and "finish," he invented that absurd fad—sketchiness, hazyness, confusedness in the plastic art. It is mere mimicry of Michelangelo's *unfinished* figures.

Now the *raison d'être* of the plastic arts is definiteness, fixity, clearness, beauty and precision of form. We want to see exact shapes, solid beings, not to have suggested to us imaginary spirits or ghosts of men. A hazy statue is no more possible than a prosy poem, a vague demonstration, or mystical geometry. It is bad enough when some young coxcomb paints as if on a wax ground and then melts it till his colours have mixed and his lines are blurred. A mystical poem is conceivably true art. But a blurred statue is an outrage on good sense. And for a statue to repel us by its ugly form and to disgust us by its brutal idea is indeed the bathos of art.

I take the famous "Penseur" which has now been set up in front of the portico of the Panthéon. What has this brawny ruffian to do with Thought, with

Heroes, with anything or any one commemorated in the Temple of Geneviève and of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Victor Hugo? The idea seems suggested by the brutal boxer in the new National Museum at Rome. If this huge naked bruiser is thinking at all, he is trying to understand in his thick skull why the other man had pounded him, or how he could contrive to pound the other man. Nothing that can be called rational thought, or noble aspiration, ever entered this beefy bulk or crossed these sullen vulgar features. The "thinker" is nothing but a corpulent athlete, crumpling himself up in an ungainly attitude. We were always told to walk round a fine statue and we should find it noble, beautiful, natural, from every point of view. I walked round and round the "Penseur," and found him awkward, ugly, and queer, in every aspect. Yet this figure is now hailed as one of the triumphs of modern Art. Why? Mainly because it is *new*—something which ancient art would never tolerate; because it is repulsive; because it is grotesque in its incongruity and its irrationality. Yes! but it is "a new departure" —it scandalises the old-fashioned world, and creates "a sensation." Ah! that is decadence indeed, whatever be its power and its life.

Well, there is one art which still flourishes in France; it has never been so brilliant, so popular, nay so dominant. Painting, sculpture, architecture, jewelry, may all be vulgarised by the love of sensation and the ostentation of wealth; but one art is still supreme. Caricature never was so much alive, so much sought, so well paid. Go and see the Exhibition of the Humorists in the Palais de Glace if you desire to enjoy a living art. It is crowded all day with the rank, beauty, and fashion of Paris. Go and see its diabolically clever caricatures of notable persons from Edward the Seventh to a music-hall singer,

its ingenious placards to boom soap, wine, corsets, cigarettes, hair dyes, and dog biscuits. There shines the true artist in his glory. There you will be able to penetrate to the mysteries of the life-school, the whims of the Quartier Latin, the buffooneries of the cabaret, the orgies of the *cocottes*—in fact, the seamy side of Paris-Bohème. And these dainty sketches are crowded all day long with smart *mondaines* and American "buds." The immortal art of caricature is in its zenith. A few fogies and tourists go to the Salon; but Tout-Paris gives itself the rendezvous at the Humorists.

France, like the rest of Europe, is being rapidly Americanised—with Yankee "notions," syndicates, telephones, and, above all, advertisements. The world is being turned into one big advertising hoarding; and life is a round of tradesmen's "drummers." The best paid artists are the men who draw picture-posters. The meadows beside the railways are fragrant with the merits of a new chocolate, lung tonic, or Dunlop tyres. Half the press consists of open or concealed trade puffs. A short story hides a cryptic recommendation for a new cure for cancer; and a speech by the Prime Minister is broken off by a picture of a bathy-colpic corset or an office clerk suffering from backache.

Literature itself, like Art, Drama, Dress, Trade—even Pleasure and Vice—has drawn new life from the Columbian science of puffery. Literature, being in low water, has invented a device to restore its lost reputation and its gains. The puffers' arts have reduced the reprints of the standard authors to a matter of centimes. To meet this the living authors are organising a movement to resist the *concurrence des Morts*. They call on the legislature to put a tax of 10 per cent on deceased writers in order to suppress



this unfair competition of the dead, to protect contemporary industry, to pay them the proceeds of the tax derived from the perverse habit of reading Voltaire and Victor Hugo instead of Gyp and Jules Lemaître. That is a lesson in Tariff Reform.

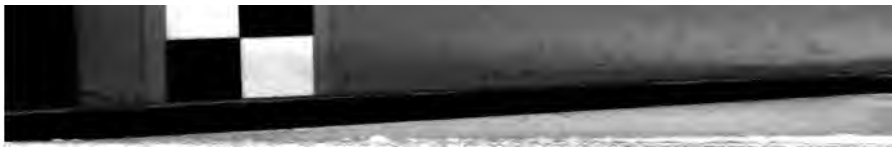
Being out of humour with painting and sculpture —partly perhaps from being in quarantine myself—I consoled myself with music and drama. By good luck I came in for the Tercentenary Night of Corneille at the Français, the Beethoven Commemoration at the Opéra, and a noble performance of Gluck's *Alceste* at the Trocadéro. Mounet Sully's *Polyeucte* is as fine as ever, and some good judges believe the play to be the masterpiece of Corneille. Those persons who have never read Corneille since they were at school and rarely see his tragedies at the Français have little idea how magnificent they are on the stage, how real and great are the possibilities of the classical drama. Shakespeare by all means; but in strict tragedy the verdict of the ages, of the majority of the human race, is for the Attic rather than the Elizabethan type.

I heard the masterpieces of Beethoven and Gluck and Wagner's *Valkyrie* sung at the Opéra by the same singers within the same week. And there again what is now called "old-fashioned conventions" triumphed over modern sensationalism. Wagner is a great genius, a dramatist of power, a superb harmonist and all that—we all agree. But it is rank Decadence that puts him beside Gluck and Beethoven. He kept us till half-past one in the morning listening to the endless *longueurs* in which two savages shout at each other in monotonous recitatives. Who knows what the quarrel is about, and why by the hour together they brandish their swords at one another and yet never close? Why these discords? Why this never-

ending tautophony? Why the cacophony? Why the exhausting length? Why the deafening blare of brass? The only answers I ever heard were because it is German—and because it is "weird," new, revolutionary.

There is nothing weird about Gluck. I heard his *Alceste* in the great amphitheatre of the Trocadéro, splendidly performed in the daylight on the great classical stage without curtain, scenery, or footlights. Gluck—not Wagner—is the real master of the future. His is the type of musical drama—almost as sweet as Mozart, more dramatic than Beethoven, less fuliginous and torrential than Wagner. I heard *Orfeo* and *Alceste* in the same week, and I hold *Alceste* to be quite as fine as the more popular *Orfeo*. Why is it not heard at Covent Garden? As one listened to its glorious melodies and stately dialogues in broad daylight on a semi-classical stage innocent of curtain, scene-shifting, and limelight, with its free spaces for chorus and processions, one could imagine what Sophocles and Euripides would have been to an Attic audience. What vulgar dogs we must be that London has never seen *Alceste*, being busy with Twaddles and a new turn at the Tivoli! Ours is the age of vulgar dogs.

Alceste convinced me of what I have long felt, that natural daylight, a broad stage, and a fixed architectural scene are the best conditions of true drama. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides showed their plays in the open air and in full light. So did Shakespeare. The footlights, the shifting canvas scenes, the lime lantern dodging the "star," are the death of real tragedy. They make "staginess" inevitable. The silly trick of darkening the auditorium till one cannot see one's next neighbour, and often darkening the stage till we hear voices but cannot see the speakers—all the



other tomfooleries of what is called "realism" on the stage—are the ruin of art. We do not want realism; we want poetry, action, tragedy, and if this cannot be given us without magic-lantern tricks, it had better be left alone. The drama will never revive till we give up all tricks.

As I was in quarantine I was not able to visit politicians and had to content myself with the newspapers, which, with rare exceptions, are the organs of sordid speculators and advertising tradesmen. I followed closely the two extraordinary strikes, that of the seamen and that of the southern wine-growers. Both had the almost unprecedented quality of being directed against the legislature—not against employers, and concerned with laws not with wages. They reveal a sinister condition of modern industry, and may be the precursors of unexpected social convulsions. They point to disintegration and anarchy, class wars and economic manias.

Of the great religious struggle not a trace was to be seen. The Church is disestablished in France, but no change whatever can be noticed by the eye. The temples are open as usual; Mass and Vespers are said as usual; nothing apparently is changed, except that the worshippers are more scanty than ever, both in cities and in villages. I entered the churches and attended services at all hours both in Paris and in the country, and was almost always alone. In one large city, the streets and market-place of which were thronged, I visited a fine old Norman church that I had known and loved as a boy in 1845. Since the days of the Crusaders, who had prayed in its walls before they set forth, it has never been so empty. In the Chapel of Our Lady a priest was muttering his rite without a single worshipper in sight. In the fine old church of Compiègne where Jeanne D'arc took

the sacrament when she sallied forth to her last fight before the town, I made a pilgrimage to the memory of the purest saint in the Calendar of Comte—though she is not in the Calendar of Rome. The town was *en fête*, and five thousand patriotic clubmen were meeting to parade before the statue of the saviour of France. But in her favourite church I was left to my meditations in solitude.

On Trinity Sunday I joined the service in Notre-Dame in Paris. How sublime is that survival of the great age of Catholic Feudalism! What miracles of devotion, chivalry, and art does it not record! What endless revolutions of thought and art, of government and of society, have those soaring vaults looked down on unchanged and unyielding! I have always loved the massive dignity of Notre-Dame, which I have known for fifty-six years, long before its eight centuries of masonry and sculpture had been modernised by pedants. I came back to it last month, and found its fabric, its ritual, its outward form the same, but, save for the tourists, it was almost deserted. The worshippers within its enclosure were fifty-two women and twenty-five men. But as I listened to the grand music swelling up into those exquisite arcades and traceries I felt it still to be the most beautiful thing in all Paris—almost the only thing that survives of true and pure art.



XIX

THE ELGIN MARBLES

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1890)

It is surely high time for us to think how and when the Elgin Marbles are to be restored to the Acropolis. There they will have ultimately to rest; and the sooner, and the more gracefully it is done, the better. The hundred years which have passed since they left Athens have entirely changed the conditions and the facts. The reasons which were held to justify Lord Elgin in removing them, and the British Government in receiving them, have one and all vanished. All those reasons now tell in favour of their being restored to their national and natural home. The protection of these unique monuments, the interests of students of art, pride in a national possession, and the *vis inertiæ* of leaving things alone, all call aloud to us to replace on that immortal steep the sacred fragments where Pericles and Pheidias placed them more than two thousand years ago.

It is usual to say, that in the British Museum these priceless works are safe, whilst they would be exposed to danger in Athens; that in London the art students of the world can study them, whilst at Athens they would be buried out of sight; that the Elgin Marbles

are now become a "British interest" as completely as Domesday Book; that as they have belonged to the nation for a century, it is too late to talk about disturbing them now.

Every one of these assertions is a sophism, and the precise contrary is in every case true. They would be much more safe from the hand of man on the Acropolis than they possibly could be in London; and whilst the climate and soot of Bloomsbury are slowly affecting their crumbling surface, the pure air of the Acropolis would preserve them longer by centuries. Athens is now a far more central archæological school than London; and the art students of the world would gain immensely if the ornaments of the Parthenon could be seen again together and beneath the shadow of the Parthenon itself. The Parthenon Marbles are to the Greek nation a thousand times more dear and more important than they ever can be to the English nation, which simply bought them. And what are the few years that these dismembered fragments have been in Bloomsbury when compared with the 2240 years wherein they stood on the Acropolis?

The stock argument for retaining the marbles in London is that they are safe here, and nobody knows what might happen at Athens. In one sense, we trust they are safe in London; but they stand in the heart of a great city, and no man can absolutely say that the Museum might not be destroyed in some great fire in Bloomsbury. As to political or riotous commotions, they are no more to be dreaded in Athens than they are in London. Whilst Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome have been the scenes of fearful street battles within late years, there has been nothing of the kind at Athens since the establishment of the kingdom. And, even if there were, it is inconceivable that either a street fight or a fire could touch the Acropolis. One



might as well say that a row in the Canongate at Edinburgh might destroy the colonnade on Calton Hill. Even a bombardment of the city of Athens would not touch the Acropolis, except with direct malice aforethought. It may be taken for certain that the Museum now standing on the summit of the Acropolis is a spot ideally protected by nature from any conceivable risk of fire, accidental injury, civil or foreign war. One can only wish that the contents of the Louvre, the National Gallery, and the Vatican were anything like as safe. And it so happens that this ideally safe spot for preserving priceless relics is the very spot where a glorious genius and a wonderful people placed them two thousand years ago.

Admit that the Elgin Marbles are (humanly speaking) safe in Bloomsbury from any conceivable risk of fire or riot—which is to admit a good deal—still it is certain that the climate of Bloomsbury is far more injurious to them than the climate of the Acropolis. The climate of the Acropolis is certainly the very best for their preservation that Europe could afford; and the climate of Bloomsbury is certainly one of the worst. Every one knows that the marvellous Pentelic marble resists in the Attic air the effect of exposure for very long periods whilst its surface is intact. When the surface is gone and the cracks begin to pass deep into the substance, the deterioration of the marble goes on rapidly. Go to our Museum and observe the cruel scars that have eaten in parallel lines the breast and ribs of the River God (Ilissus). Night and day those scars are being subtly filled with London soot. It is no doubt true that the antique marbles are occasionally washed and cleaned. But at what a cost, and at what a risk!

Of course the man in Pall Mall or in the club arm-chair has his sneer ready—"Are you going to send

all statues back to the spot where they were found?" That is all nonsense. The Elgin Marbles stand upon a footing entirely different from all other statues. They are not statues: they are architectural parts of a unique building, the most famous in the world; a building still standing, though in a ruined state, which is the national symbol and palladium of a gallant people, and which is a place of pilgrimage to civilised mankind. When civilised man makes his pilgrimage to the Acropolis and passes through the Propylæa, he notes the exquisite shrine of "Nike Apteros," with part of its frieze intact and the rest of the frieze filled up in plaster, *because the original is in London.* He goes on to the "Erechtheion," and there he sees that one of the lovely Caryatides who support the cornice is a composition cast, *because the original is in London.* He goes on to the Parthenon, and there he marks the pediments which Lord Elgin wrecked and left a wreck stripped of their figures; he sees long bare slices of torn marble, whence the frieze was gutted out, and the sixteen holes where the two ambassadors wrenched out the Metopes. We English have wrung off and hold essential parts of a great national building, which bears wreckage on its mangled brow, and which, like Œdipus at Colonus, holds up to view the hollow orbs out of which we tore the very eyes of Pheidias.

When Lord Elgin committed this dreadful havoc, he may have honestly thought that he was preserving for mankind these precious relics. The Turks took no heed of them, and the few Greeks could only mutter their feeble groan in silence. But everything is now changed. To the Greek nation now the ruins on the Acropolis are far more important and sacred than are any other national monuments to any other people. They form the outward and visible sign of the national existence and re-birth. But for the



glorious traditions of Athens, of which these pathetic ruins are the everlasting embodiment, Greece would never have attracted the sympathy of the civilised world and would not have been assisted to assert herself as a free State. At the foundation of it, Corinth, astride on both seas on her isthmus, had many superior claims as a capital. The existence of the Acropolis made any capital but Athens impossible, as it makes Greece herself incorporated on the base of her ancient glory.

Thus to free Greece the Acropolis is the great national symbol: more than the Forum and the Palatine are to Rome, more than the Duomo and the Palazzo Vecchio are to Florence, more than Notre-Dame and the Louvre are to Paris, more than the Abbey, Westminster Hall, and the Tower are to London. Rome, Florence, Paris, London, have scores of historic monuments and national memorials; and they all have many other centuries of ancient history and many other phases of national achievement. Athens has only one: Greece is centred round Athens: and ancient Athens means the Acropolis and its surroundings.

We profess to be proud of our Tower and Abbey and our national monuments. To the patriotic Athenian of to-day the Acropolis represents Tower, Abbey, St. Stephen's, Westminster Hall, Domesday Book, Magna Carta, and all our historic memorials together. He has nothing else; and the sight day and night of that vast, lonely, towering mass of ruin, with its weird but silent message from the past, produces on the subtle imagination of a sensitive people an effect infinitely deeper than even our Abbey produces on a Londoner. And every morning and evening that the Athenian raises his eyes to his Abbey he sees the scars where, in a time of national humiliation, a rich

Englishman wrenched off slices of the building to place in his collection at home. What would be the feelings of an Englishman if he saw the Abbey gutted within this century, and knew that the shrine of the Confessor, the tombs of the Kings, the altar screen, the chair and sword, and the Purbeck columns from the transepts and the Chapter House, had been carried off, during the occupation of the country by a foreign enemy, by an amateur with a fine taste for antiques, and a good nose for a bargain, to put into his "collection"? The case is far stronger than this: for the Elgin Marbles are not statues, or tombs; they form indispensable parts of the most symmetrical building ever raised by man.

Naturally, the antiques found in Greece form a far more important interest to the whole nation than they can to a nation which has simply purchased or "conveyed" them. No people in the world are so intensely jealous of their national memorials as the Greeks of to-day. They form their claims to sympathy as a people, the symbol of their traditional past, their peculiar claim to a unique interest, and no doubt much of what Demetrius the silversmith and Alexander the coppersmith told their fellow-citizens was the practical value of Diana of the Ephesians. At a moderate computation the ruins and the museums are worth £100,000 a year to the Greek people. They have made stringent laws not only to keep every fragment of antiquity in the country, but to keep every fresh discovery in the very district and spot where it is found. We need not discuss the policy of this. A very strong government recently found it impossible to move the "Hermes" of Praxiteles from Olympia to Athens. And no doubt the ruins of Olympia are now worth a new railway to the modern inhabitants of Elis.



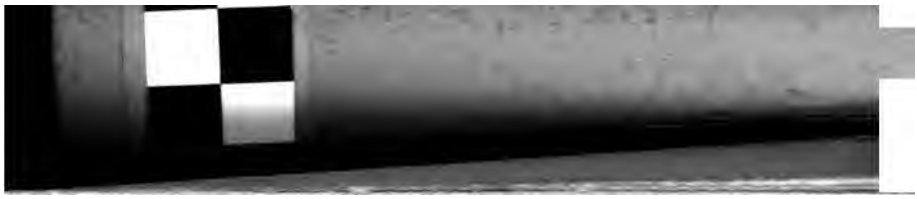
Greece is now quite full of museums. In Athens alone there are seven or eight, of which three are principal and distinct national collections. These, at any rate, are as suitable, as well kept, and as accessible as are the museums of any capital in the world. They are year by year, and almost month by month, increasing in value and importance. With excellent judgment the Greeks have resolved to form a special Museum on the rock of the Acropolis, conveniently sunk in the south-eastern angle, in which is placed every fragment recovered, not *in situ*, from any building raised on the Acropolis itself. This Museum, small as it is, is already to the art-student one of the most indispensable in existence. Here are the exquisite reliefs of "Nike"; here are all the detached fragments which have been recovered from the Parthenon, from pediments, metopes, and frieze; here too are the archaic figures from the temples destroyed by Xerxes before Salamis. This last feature alone places this little Museum in the front rank of the collections of the world for purposes of studying the history of art. For the history of glyptic art, the Acropolis has within the last twenty years become the natural rendezvous of the student. The Greeks, Germans, English and French have founded special schools of archæology, and other nations have formed less formal centres of study. The result is that Athens is now become a school of archæology, far more important in itself, and far more international in character, than London is or ever can be.

By what right, except that of possession, do we continue to withhold from the students and pilgrims who flock to the Acropolis from all parts of the civilised world substantive portions of the unique building which they come to study, those decorations of it which lose half their artistic interest and their

historic meaning when separated from it by 4000 miles of sea? The most casual amateur, as well as the mere tiro in art, can at once perceive how greatly the Pheidian sculptures gain when they can be seen in the Attic sunlight, alongside of the architectural frame for which they were made, and at least under the shadow of the building of which they form part. The ruined colonnades are necessary to explain the carvings; and the carvings give life and voice to the ruined colonnades. These demigods seem to pine and mope in the London murk; in their native sunlight the fragments seem to breathe again.

On the Acropolis itself every fragment from Pheidias's brain seems as sacred and as venerable as if it were the very bones of a hero. In a London Museum they are objects of curious interest, like the Dodo or the Rosetta stone—most instructive and of intense interest—but they are not relics, such as make the spot whereon we stand sacred in our eyes, as do the tombs of the Edwards or the graves of the poets in our Abbey. In the British Museum the excellent directors, feeling how much the *genius loci* affects these Elgin Marbles, have placed models, casts, and various devices to explain to the visitor the form of the Acropolis and the place of these carvings in the Parthenon. They try to bring the Acropolis into our Elgin Room at Bloomsbury, instead of sending the contents of the Elgin Room to the Acropolis! One might as well imagine that the tombs of the kings in our Abbey had been carried off to put in a museum in St. Petersburg, and that the Russian keeper of the antiquities had set up a model of the Abbey beside them, in order to give the Muscovite public a faint sense of the *genius loci*.

It is enough to make the cheek of an honest Englishman burn when he first sees the ghastly rents



which British (North British) taste tore out of this temple, and then passes into the humble museum below where the remnants are preserved. They are not so important as our Elgin trophies, but they are very important—beautiful, unique, and quite priceless. And then come long ranges of casts—*the originals in London*—and so the whole series is maimed and disfigured. In the case of at least one metope the Acropolis Museum possesses one half, the other half of which is in London. So that of a single group, the invention of a consummate genius, and the whole of which is extant, London shows half in marble and half in plaster cast, and the Acropolis shows the other half in marble and the rest in plaster. Surely it were but decent, if we honestly respect great art, that the original should be set up as a whole. But it seems that in the present century we show our profound veneration for a mighty genius by splitting one of his works into two and exhibiting the fragments severed at opposite corners of Europe, as mediæval monks thought their country's honour consisted in exhibiting here a leg and here an arm of some mythical patron saint.

No one in his senses would talk about *restoring* the Parthenon, and no one dreams of replacing the marbles in the Pediments. What might be done is to replace the Northern Frieze of "Nike Apteros," and restore the Caryatid to her sisters beneath the cornice of "Erechtheion." The difference between the effect of the Pheidian fragments as seen in Bloomsbury and that of the Pheidian fragments as seen on the Acropolis is one that only ignorance and vulgarity could mistake. Who would care for the Virgins, Saints, and "Last Judgments" from the portals of Amiens, Reims, or Chartres if they were stuck on pedestals and catalogued at Bloomsbury, with or without cork models of the cathedral?

The notion that the interests of art demand the retention of parts of a great building in a foreign country is a mere bit of British Philistinism and art gabble. The true interests of art demand that the fragments which time and man have spared of the most interesting building in the world should be seen together, seen in their native sky and under all the complex associations of that most hallowed spot. One might as well argue that the interests of art would be served if Michelangelo's "Last Judgment" were stripped off the Sistine wall, cut up into square blocks, and hung in gold frames in Trafalgar Square.

It is idle now to reopen the story of the original plunder. British self-complacency has long been content with the old maxim—*fieri non debuit, factum valet.* Happily the English name and our national literature has cleared itself of offence by a noble protest which will outlive the names both of Elgin and of Herostratus. Byron said not one word too much. But since the days of Byron and Lord Elgin everything has changed. Athens is now a city as regularly governed, as much frequented, and nearly as large as Florence or Venice. The Greek nation, small as it is, is as much entitled to honourable consideration as Holland, Belgium, Denmark, or Switzerland. The familiar sneers of Pall Mall and Fleet Street about Greek democracy and the Hellenic blood have nothing to do with the matter. Greece is now a friendly nation with a regular government. It has also within recent years become a settled country, open to all men, and one of the great centres of art study for the civilised world. To Greece the Acropolis is more important than are Malta and Gibraltar to England. The question is how long this country, in an ignorant assumption of "the interests of art,"



will continue to inflict a wholly disproportionate humiliation on a small but sensitive and otherwise friendly people.

How the restoration could be managed it is not worth discussing here. Obviously by some kind of international treaty. The bulk of the Parthenon, of course, is now on the Acropolis. But London holds the most precious remnants from both Pediments. Paris, it seems, has one of the South Metopes, some fragments from the West Pediment, and a small section of the East Frieze. London has fifteen Metopes, out of the original ninety-two. What remains of the rest are still *in situ*, or in the Acropolis Museum. London has the larger part of the South, North, and East Frieze; the remainder is on the Acropolis, except a section at Paris. Happily the noble West Frieze remains nearly perfect *in situ*. Thus the Acropolis now contains:—

1. All that remains of the Building itself.
2. Some grand fragments from both Pediments.
3. All that remains of ninety-two Metopes, except sixteen.
4. About one-third of what exists of the Frieze.[1]

The question is, How can all these sections be reunited on the Acropolis? Obviously by an international treaty, in which France, for reasons that need not be stated, would willingly join. She would be proud to lay down her petty fragments on the altar of Athene, for the pleasure of seeing Albion disgorge. The Greeks would accept any terms:—

Hoc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridae.

It would not consist with our honour to make a

[1] These proportions are stated roughly, for the general argument, and not with archæological pretensions. I know that the archæologists bark and growl at a lay interloper, like the street dogs of Constantinople at a strange cur.

paltry bargain. Let the 35,000 pieces of silver (or was it gold?) that we paid to Milord perish with him. We shall restore the Parthenon Marbles much as we restored the Ionian Islands and Heligoland to their national owners, because we value the good name of England more than unjust plunder. If the barkers of Pall Mall and the opposition rags have to be quieted, let us give them to munch a commercial treaty. A little Free Trade with England would satisfy the growlers, and would do the Greeks permanent good. But let us have no higgling. Let us do the right thing with a free hand.

Was it too much to hope that such a treaty might be made by the Englishman whom the world knows as the lover of Homer, and whom the Hellenes of to-day always associate with their country and their hopes? He earned the gratitude of Greeks, the thanks of England, and the respect of honest men everywhere when he restored the Western Islands to their own countrymen. He might have earned a more enduring and touching gratitude by replacing on the sublime rock wherein centre so many of the memories of mankind those inimitable marbles which Pericles and Pheidias set up there in a supreme moment of the world's history. It is a cruel mockery, in the name of "high art," to leave them scattered about the galleries of Europe.

All the circumstances are entirely changed since the Elgin Marbles were removed in 1801. The Greek nation is now a free, independent, and civilised nation in Europe. Their claim to national importance rests very largely on their historic associations. They are keen enough to know that this title greatly depends on the value they set on these associations. Historic symbols, antiquities, and the possession of the Holy Places of ancient poetry and art, are thus to the



Greeks quite as important as an army or a fleet, and indeed much more so. The nation is thus quite fanatically jealous of its national monuments, which play a larger part in Greece than in other modern nations. As a matter of fact, the museums and antiquities of Greece are now very well and carefully protected: the Acropolis is now far more secure from conceivable accident than is the museum in Bloomsbury. The idea that under any possible conditions the Acropolis is likely to be exposed to modern artillery fire is one that those who have ever seen it can only laugh at. The whole Acropolis is fenced and guarded just as the British Museum is. If a drunken sailor ever did any damage, it could only be by escaping the guards, just as a madman once smashed our Portland vase.

Athens is now a central art school for all nations, and since the opening of the railway to Salonica and Constantinople, is frequented like Venice, or Florence; and to all Europe that lies south and east of Munich, it is at least as accessible as London. The idea that Athens is a place as wild and remote as Baghdad, where Albanians and drunken sailors engage in faction fights, whose streets are a sort of Petticoat Lane and Whitechapel, and where an occasional Milord arrives with his dragoman and tents, is an idea derived from the "travels" of our youth. Athens is now a city as well policed, as orderly, as cultivated, and as full of intelligent visitors as any of the towns of Germany, Italy, or France. As a centre of archæological study, to the whole world, Old and New, Athens is now a more important school than London.

All these arguments are mere pretexts to bolster up—possession. They would equally apply to all other national monuments which a stronger power desired to keep from a weaker. When Napoleon I.

ransacked the churches and galleries of Italy, the French also could talk big about the superior safety of Paris, the miserable carelessness of the Italians, the paramount interests of High Art, and their own noble capital as the centre of civilisation. When Napoleon III. captured Rome, when Bismarck captured Paris, each might have carried off the contents of the Vatican and the Louvre, to take them out of the keeping of a degenerate race who were always bringing an enemy about their ears, and to guard these works of art as a precious inheritance "for the use and profit of mankind."

I appeal to the public conscience, for the sake of England's good name and in the true interests of art as a moral and a social force. In that appeal I have been warmly supported both at home and abroad. And by love for England and for Art, I understand something wider and more human than sneers at the barbarism of the foreigner and the simpering of dilettanti over objects in glass-cases. I would rather see our island "inviolate," by virtue of her generous bearing to all, than by the menace of her guns and the trophies she may have won in battle. And to me the love of Art is inseparable from love and reverence for the great artist, for the dust whereon he trod and with which he is mingled, with the *genius loci* of the temple of art which he raised and loved, and with the national traditions to which even the noblest art can add but a mere deepening of the glow.



XX

A POMPEII FOR THE THIRTIETH CENTURY

(*From the "Nineteenth Century,"* 1890)

We live in an age of archæological research; and there never was a time when so much industry and genius were given to restore for the men of to-day the exact life of our ancestors in the past. All ages, all races, all corners of the planet have been ransacked to yield up their buried memorials of distant times. Rome, Pompeii, Athens, Olympia, Delphi, Asia Minor, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, India, Mexico, have rewarded the learned digger with priceless relics. The Rosetta stone, the Behistun rock, the Fayum, have revealed entire epochs of civilisation to our delighted eyes. We have a passion for *looking backwards*—and it is one of our most worthy and most useful pursuits. There is one age, however, for which our archæological zeal does nothing. We are absorbed in thinking about our ancestors: why do we not give a thought to our descendants? Should we not provide something for posterity? Let us, once in a way, take to *looking forwards*; and, with all our archæological experience and all the resources of

science, deliberately prepare a Pompeii, a Karnak, a Hissarlik, for the students of the thirtieth century.

Every student of history knows that the vast superiority we possess to-day over the age of Shakespeare and Bacon in our accurate understanding of the past is due to the antiquarian research and the marvellous discoveries of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The unearthing of Pompeii, of the Forum, the Acropolis, of Budrun, the tombs along the Nile, and the palaces of Nineveh, the deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, of the arrow-head inscriptions, of Gnossos, the Fayum, Delphi, of the Etruscan tombs, of the Runic monuments, the recovery of the Institutes of Gaius by Niebuhr, the collection of the Vatican Manuscripts, the labours of such men as Niebuhr, Mommsen, Savigny, Curtius, Canina, Lepsius, Brugsch, Layard, Maspero, Lanciani, Budge, Petrie, Evans, Hogarth; the editing of the State Papers—all that is represented by the British Museum, the Record Office, the Louvre, Boulak, Olympia, Delphi, and the libraries of Berlin and the Vatican—have enabled historians accurately to present to our minds the thoughts, the life, the very look of the past. After infinite labour and through cruel disappointments, we are beginning to feel the unbroken biography of the human race as a single and intelligible story.

And yet how incessant the labour by which these triumphs have been won! How heartrending the disappointments, how cruel the waste, how irreparable the loss! We, the heirs of time, stand, like Crusoe the morning after the wreck, mournfully surveying the destruction, and eagerly picking up the priceless fragments that chance and the elements have spared. The glorious ship was but a mass of splinters; his comrades lay tossing with the seaweed beneath the



waves; the stores and tools, merchandise, food, arms, books, instruments and charts were swept into the deep, whilst here and there he could pick out a gun, a saw, some damaged biscuit and a soaked Bible. It was his all. So we rescue now and then the torso of a Melian Aphrodite, a Vatican Testament, the Domesday Survey, a fresco from the Palatine or the tombs of the Egyptian and Assyrian kings.

But, if we had the seventy plays of Æschylus, the hundred and more of Sophocles, the whole of Polybius, of Livius, of Tacitus, if we had Dante's entire writings in his own manuscript, if we had an authentic, perfect holograph Shakespeare, if we had intact one single statue of the great age, one absolutely genuine portrait of some ancient hero, poet, or thinker! If we could only imagine what the *Agamemnon* or the *Clouds* sounded like, as men sat and listened on the tiers of the Theatre of Dionysus! Whole lives have been spent in trying to restore for us the "Zeus" or the "Athene" of Pheidias, as they shone forth all ivory and gold; in recalling to life an Egyptian sacred procession, a Roman triumph, a mediæval army, a pilgrimage to Canterbury or Jerusalem. How cruelly chance has gone against us! Cursed was the fire that consumed the "Cnidian Aphrodite" of Praxiteles; abhorred be the sea which overwhelmed Michelangelo's designs for the "Inferno"! If science had been able then to preserve for us but a tithe of the precious things which fire, water, air, the brutal ignorance of man, the blear-eyed stupidity of monks, the ambition of kings, the greed of traders, and the slow all-consuming dust of ages have destroyed! If some contemporary photograph could have presented for us the faces of Pericles, Socrates, Virgil, Alfred, Columbus, Shakespeare; or the Parthenon as it looked on the day of its dedication; or the Forum, when

Julius triumphed over the Gauls! If some phonograph could repeat to us the very tones of Æschylus reading his *Prometheus*, or Virgil's as he recited the sixth *Æneid* to Augustus, or the very voice of Saint Bernard at the Council of Sens, or of Shakespeare as he played the Ghost in *Hamlet*? Or—oh that the invention of printing could have been antedated, and that we had exact copies of the entire works of Tyrtæus and Sappho, of Menander and Ennius, of Archimedes, Aristotle, and Pythagoras! If but one library, one cathedral, one castle, one market-place of the Middle Ages had been preserved for us untouched, unfaded, with all its surroundings perfect!

The proposal I make is this. Let the science and learning of the twentieth century do for the thirtieth century what we would give millions sterling to buy, if the tenth century A.D., or the tenth century B.C., had been able and willing to do it for us. In other words, let us deliberately, with all the resources of modern science, and by utilising all its wonderful instruments, prepare for future ages a sort of Pompeii or Boulak museum, or Vatican library, wherein the language, the literature, the science, the art, the life, the manners, the appearance of our own age and its best representatives may be treasured up as a sacred deposit for the instruction of our distant descendants. Let us no longer leave it to chance whether our knowledge and our life be preserved for them or not. Let us do all that forethought, experience, and science can do to perpetuate the best products and the noblest men of the present age. The thing is done in every royal and important family. Portraits are accumulated by each generation to give to its successors the living effigy of its ancestors. All published books are by law deposited in the British Museum. A complete series of all coins, seals, and medals is carefully pre-



served in more than one public institution. Coins form, perhaps, the most absolutely trustworthy and continuous series of monuments in the whole range of our materials for historic research; for they alone are able to withstand the attacks of time. It is usual, when a public building is begun, to place, in a ceremonial manner, a series of coins, a few documents, and a copy of the *Times* newspaper under *the first stone.* That is indeed a futile and trivial mode of providing for the historic research of ages to come. But it contains the principle. And the present proposal is simply to do, on a truly national scale, and in a complete, systematic, and scientific mode, what on a local scale, and in a shamefaced, serio-comic style, and with much tomfoolery of the aldermanic sort, we do, up and down the country, a dozen times in every year.

The problem is this—to preserve for the next ten (or even twenty) centuries a small museum in which we may store a careful selection of those products of to-day which we think will be most useful and instructive to our distant descendants. The conditions to be observed are these:—

1. A place, as far as human foresight can tell, secure from any possible change, physical, social, industrial, or mechanical—so strong, so remote, so protected that nothing but great labour, scientific appliances, and public authority could ever again disturb it.

2. The construction in such a spot of a National Safe, on a simple scale and at moderate cost, scientifically contrived to protect valuable things in deposit; but such as to awaken no possible opposition from artistic, economical, political, or religious susceptibilities.

3. An arrangement so that each century, in its

turn, might have access to its own safe, without disturbing the rest.

4. The placing therein a rational and fairly representative collection of the best works, memorials, and specimens of our own age.

5. The construction of such a museum within moderate limits and at a practicable cost.

6. The protection of the museum by some public sanction and national authority.

Let us examine each of these conditions in detail.

I. A strong room, which is to last ten centuries, must be placed far from any city, in a remote spot not liable to be wanted. If it were in the capital, or indeed anywhere near the haunts of man, some Sir Edward Watkin, or J. S. Forbes of the future, would be driving a railway through it, or make it, perhaps, the central Balloon Terminus of the Universe. Like St. Paul's, the Tower of London, or Westminster Abbey, it might be wanted by the enterprising engineer, or a syndicate about to found a new electric city or a continent in the air. I propose a spot, like Salisbury Plain, which it is difficult to imagine that even Sir Edward Watkin could ever persuade Parliament to give him, or that even in the thirtieth century could ever be included in the suburbs of London. Say Salisbury Plain, a spot beside Stonehenge; nay, it might be incorporated with Stonehenge itself, and thus link the centuries A.D. to those B.C.

II. No building of any kind would be safe; and none is wanted. A Pyramid would serve the purpose; but we have no Pharaohs and no Chosen People; and though Pyramids may be built without straw, we cannot as yet build them without hands. Any building, however massive, may be destroyed. Fire, war, insurrection, greed, taste, caprice, and necessity have it down in the end. The Tower of Babel, Babylon



itself, the Colosseum, and the Temple of Ephesus, have all gone the way of all brick and stone. Besides, a building would cost much money. It would provoke the communists, the contractors, and the art societies to destroy it, or convert it. Lord Grimthorpe would want to restore it. And he, William Morris, and Mr. Cavendish Bentinck would squirt vitriol at each other about it, and its destiny. No! A building of any kind is quite out of the question, and none is wanted.

All that we want is a vaulted chamber. And this must be subterranean. It would practically occupy no space at all on the surface, or none that any man could ever want. A hundred pounds might buy the site, or we might utilise a disused mine or drive a gallery underneath Skiddaw or the Malvern Hills. Nothing is simpler than a few vaults—dug, say, beside Stonehenge, cased twenty feet thick with the strongest known cement. A plain granite portal with a suitable inscription would be the sole architectural feature. When finished and filled, the museum would be solemnly closed up with twenty or thirty feet of cement, and a plain granite block between the granite piers would finally bar the entrance. There would be neither doors, keys, nor locks. Nothing but a gang of navvies, working for weeks under a staff of engineers, could ever open it again. It would need no guarding, no insurance, and no outlay. Fire, destruction, contractors, even an earthquake, could not touch it. So long as this island keeps its head above the German Ocean, so long the National Safe would exist.

III. The National Safe might consist of a gallery with a series of subterranean vaults, like the catacombs at Rome, or the chambers under the Pyramids. The scheme might be carried to any extent; but for simplicity we may limit our views to the next ten

centuries, and provide ten vaults, each thirty or forty feet square, with perhaps a double or treble space for the tenth. Each vault would contain a careful collection of products, works, inscriptions, pictures, books, instruments, and the like, of the nineteenth century. Each vault might be opened officially by some public authority and with legislative sanction only, on the last year of each century. As the collection would be in duplicate, each vault containing practically the same objects, there would be no inducement to anticipate the ages by opening any vault before the appointed time. Each century, having opened its own vault, might make its own deposit, seal it up, and finally close the general entrance in the same way, or as its own improved scientific knowledge might suggest. The tenth vault might hold a special and fuller collection, as being the more distant and liable to decay.

IV. As to the mode of preservation the present writer would rather make no suggestions. It is a problem for engineers, physicists, mechanicians, opticians, photographers, architects, and specialists of various kinds. It might call out a body of ingenious suggestions; and the problem appeals to great numbers of experts. How can we preserve untouched for a thousand years books, pictures, records, portraits, models, instruments, coins, medals, specimens, and products of various kinds? We may assume that, as an outside casing, some form of cement, to some thickness yet to be determined, would be an almost absolute protection from fire, water, plunder, and even a restoration committee. Inscriptions cut upon lava and cased with glass might be trusted to see out the life of the planet. Let experts tell us how to protect books. A few precious poems or the like might be printed on vellum or composition, and secured in hermetically-sealed glass cases. Photogravures on stone,



similarly protected and with all light excluded, might remain for centuries. A few choice paintings, if needful on panel, or on porcelain or ivory, might be sealed up in air-tight boxes. If experts could suggest a mode of protecting photographs from decay, or of transferring a photographic picture to some indestructible substance, it is clear that we might preserve for the thirtieth century photographic portraits of our great men, views of our public buildings, of our daily life, of many a historic incident.

What would Lord Rosebery or the Duke of Westminster bid at Christie's for a permanent photograph on porcelain of Augustus at supper with Virgil, Horace, and Ovid round him, or of Alfred sitting in council at Winchester, or of Edward the First in his first Parliament, or the signing of Magna Carta, or the battle of Agincourt, or even Elizabeth listening to a play of Shakespeare? And why should not the phonograph be tried also? The Laureate would recite the *Princess*, and his chosen bits from *In Memoriam* into a phonographic box, which it would be the business of Mr. Edison to protect for a thousand years. A copy of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* would give the thirtieth century an adequate idea of our present knowledge and opinions. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery and Professor Huxley, might live again by photograph, phonograph, and preserved speeches and writings. A copy of *Hansard*, of the *Times*, of the *Graphic*, of *Bradshaw*, of Whitaker's *Almanack*, of the *Nineteenth Century*, a set of Ordnance maps, the British Museum *Catalogue*, the catalogues of the Art galleries, would teach the thirtieth century more about the nineteenth than a thousand scholars have been able to teach us about the tenth. If one had but a Whitaker's *Almanack* for the year 1 A.D., or for the year 1000, or 1300, or even 1600! Models

of a locomotive, of an ironclad first-rate, of the Forth Bridge, of the House of Commons, might be thrown in, along with a dressed doll representing the Prime Minister or a fine lady dressed for a drawing-room. There is no limit to the exact and interesting information which we might store up for the use of our posterity, if science will only show us how to preserve photographic pictures indefinitely, and how to protect books, drawings, paintings, instruments, and specimens for a thousand years.

A wide field would be open to our physicists and inventors to discover processes by which things in daily use could be protected against decay and the action of the elements. Whether any metal, or some form of porcelain, or a composition be the better material, we need not decide. It might be worth while to place specimens of various materials together, so as to give posterity the means of judging which material, under exactly the same conditions, ultimately proves the most desirable. But, having found a suitable material, or a suitable casing, the most delicate and fragile of our ordinary surroundings might be preserved for our most distant descendants. Portraits by hand and by photographic process of our foremost statesmen, poets, thinkers, and men of mark, copies of our most important books, catalogues, plans, maps, views, dictionaries, and the like, would be of surpassing interest a thousand years hence. If the phonograph could be protected from decay, the thirtieth century might listen to a speech by Mr. Gladstone, a poem by the Laureate, a song by Madame Patti, and a sonata by M. Joachim. Sets of the Ordnance maps, plans, geographical atlases, post-office directories, catalogues of public libraries, and dictionaries of various kinds would be useful to distant ages. Let us reflect on the unique value to the historian of the rare official



documents which have survived—the Domesday Survey, the Great Charter, the English Chronicle, meagre and accidental as these notices too often are. Of what extreme value to the historian of the thirtieth century would be the possession of a complete official record of England in the twentieth century!

There are a few things to which attention might be specially directed, as being such as are liable to disappear altogether, or such as are certain to undergo continual change. Such are plans of great cities and great public buildings, maps of the country, marine and geological charts, pictures and descriptions of the actual fauna and flora. Special care might be given to preserve for distant ages some exact record of the animals and plants which there is too much reason to fear will have disappeared from the planet long before many centuries have passed. It is a melancholy reflection that our descendants will never see a most beautiful, useful, and unique substance—which we so carelessly abuse and waste—ivory. The elephant, the last of the great mammoth tribe, which savage fools kill for "sport," and foolish savages kill for gain, can hardly last another century on this planet. In the thirtieth century the elephant will be a memory far more distant than the mammoth. And with the elephant will disappear no doubt the seal, the whale, and all the marine mammals, whose habits and form expose them to the reckless cupidity of man. By the thirtieth century we may fear that all the larger wild mammals will have disappeared—certainly the elephant, the rhinoceros, the giraffe, the hippopotamus, with all rare African beasts; no doubt also, the lion, the tiger, the bear, the buffalo, and their congeners.

Of course the wolf, the fox, the chamois, the antelope, the wild boar, the kangaroo, and the like, are doomed to early extinction before the march of

civilisation and the vile thirst for "sport." We ought not to leave to our descendants the task of piecing together their scattered bones, as we have had to do for the Megatherium and the Dinornis. Of all the fauna which we may reasonably expect to be "extinct" a thousand years hence, we ought to leave our posterity an exact and full record.

In the same way, we ought to leave them a record of the actual state of this planet and our island. When we reflect on the enormous value to us of the travels of Herodotus, of the paintings on Egyptian monuments, of the engraved plan of the Forum, of the Bayeux tapestry, of the Hereford *Mappa Mundi*, and of a few rude sketches in illuminated manuscripts, we may estimate what it would be to our descendants to have full, accurate, and contemporary maps and plans of England as it stands to-day. London in the thirtieth century may be as desolate as *Birs Nimroud* or Egyptian Thebes. What a boon will it be to the New Zealand globe-trotter of 2908, as he sits on the last broken arch of London Bridge to which his electric balloon is moored, and takes his luncheon of ambrosia and manna, to have by his side, as he tries to trace the mound which covers St. Paul's and the Abbey, an electro-photographic reprint of the Ordnance plan of 1908! And if to this plan of the ancient city he could add authentic views of London, as it appeared in the dim light of hoar antiquity, how well-informed, to the ninth power of a German professor, would be our young friend from the Antipodes!

It may be said that these things will take care of themselves, and that all which is useful will survive. A few great books no doubt will survive a thousand years and more. But there will be infinite interest a thousand years hence in the ordinary books of information which are very likely to perish. Our curious young



New Zealander of 2908 would no doubt much prefer a Whitaker's *Almanack* or a Bradshaw's *Railway Guide* of 1908 to all the works of Mr. Froude or Robert Browning. Which would we rather have to-day—the epics of Lucius Varius, or a Post-Office Directory of Rome under Augustus? These things should not be left to chance.

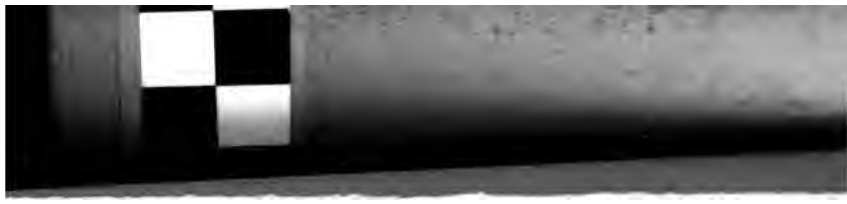
V. And now comes the question:—How is this to be paid for, and how is it to be done? A question not so difficult as it seems. In a normal state of society, one would say that it was the business of the State or the Church. But there is no State and no Church nowadays: these are obsolete legal formulas. If Mr. Balfour proposed it, Mr. Hardie would foam at him with indignant patriotism. If Mr. Asquith proposed it, the Suffragettes would mock at him, as the children mocked at Elisha the Prophet, saying, "Go up, thou bald head!" And if the Archbishop of Canterbury proposed it, the Dissenters would rise up as one man. And if Dr. Clifford suggested it, Churchmen would see in it a fresh attack on their beloved Establishment. So State and Church are alike out of the question: both are reduced to a condition of dead-lock.

It must be done by voluntary effort and by free gift, if at all. Perhaps, if the Treasury were not asked for a penny, they would consent to giving the movement some simple legislative authority, or the sanction of a Royal Commission. The outlay in money would be very moderate, for neither costly building nor valuable site is needed. All that is absolutely wanted is a small catacomb somewhere in a remote waste, such as Salisbury Plain, not more expensive to make than a few vaults in a cemetery. The objects stored would not be intrinsically of much market value; or, if they were, they might be looked

for as free gifts. The difficulty of the committee of selection would be to refuse, to reject, to exclude. Artists, authors, inventors, and producers of all kinds would be only too eager to deposit works which would be destined to so distant and certain an immortality. A Greek or Roman temple was cram full of votive offerings of great beauty, inscribed with the names of donor and artist, which century after century remained to delight and instruct posterity. We gaze to-day with profound pathos on the simple words—ΚΑΛΛΙΑΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕΝ ΠΥΡΡΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ—*Callias dedicated this: Pyrrhus made it.* What, if the temple of Delphi, or the *Cella* of the Parthenon, or the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, had been, with all their contents, sunk in the earth and hermetically sealed until our day! With what wonder and joy should we proceed to open and survey the sacred treasure-chamber! And what artist or patron of art would not long to inscribe his name on the offerings which would one day be the object of such interest?

If Sir Frederick Leighton had dedicated thus his "Psyche," Sir J. Millais his "Chill October," Mr. Watts his "Portrait of Mr. Gladstone," the Laureate his *Poems* printed on vellum, Mr. Ruskin the manuscript original of the *Modern Painters* with his own sketches for his published works, if Mr. Gladstone had given his correspondence, if Lord Rothschild would offer a collection of historical curios, and some other collectors would supply cases of autograph writings and letters, a series of contemporary portraits and the like, posterity would have had an archæological "find" such as never before occurred in history. Permission to inscribe the name of author or donor would be enough to cause the committee of selection to be inundated with offers and overwhelmed with gifts.

For this reason it would be necessary to clothe the



committee of selection with a national character and some legislative sanction. A Royal Commission of men representing Art, Science, Literature, Industry, and Statistics, could easily manage an undertaking far simpler than a Great Exhibition. Let us have a rest from Great Exhibitions for a year or two; and try to organise a posthumous Exhibition for the benefit of posterity. As to funds, since we cannot effect a *post obit* for the amount, or draw a cheque on the thirtieth century, a simple contrivance will suffice. It will be reasonable that the portal of the National Safe should contain a statement of its origin and purpose; and such statement would naturally include the names of those who assist it. A statement with a list of all who share in the work might fairly be inscribed both within and without the chamber.

VI. All that is needed further by way of legislative sanction would be a short Act, which perhaps would not be blocked by the most desperate obstructive, to the effect that the National Safe was to be held as incorporated with the British Museum, held in trust for the nation by the trustees of the Museum, and protected from wanton injury by the law for the time being applying to the protection of works of art and interest in the national collections. From its own enormous strength, the National Safe would not be liable to accidental or mischievous destruction. And as it would contain nothing of market value, it would never be exposed to plunder, even during war or insurrection. Access to it in any case would be physically difficult: a matter of prolonged engineering labour. But to prevent the premature examination of its contents, out of mere curiosity and impatience, the Act should provide that it could only be opened by formal national authority, and by Act of Parliament *ad hoc*, or such supreme legislative Act

as may hereafter replace our Acts of Parliament of to-day.

If, with means so simple, and without any call on the public purse, so useful an end can be obtained, there seems to be no reasonable objection to making the attempt. Its enormous value and interest to our distant descendants is obvious. That posterity has done nothing for us is a claptrap objection which we need not stop to notice. Nothing could be more useful than to think about posterity's interests more seriously than we do, to leave fewer things to chance, and to husband and store the perishable things of this earth. The lesson of history is continually reminding us of the cruel and wanton destruction wrought by generation after generation, each in brutal indifference to its successor. Forests, plantations, animal races, mines, and a thousand useful things are being consumed or driven from the face of the earth. A few centuries more and the human race will have exhausted gold, silver, coal, ivory, fur, whalebone, and perhaps oak and mahogany. Substitutes of course will be found; but cat-skins are not so nice as sable, aluminium is not so beautiful as gold, and chemical or vegetable compounds are a poor makeshift for ivory. It is fearful to think of all the waste and destruction that each age has wrought on the products of the last. The ruin of the Acropolis and the Forum in sheer wantonness; the burning of the Alexandrian Museum; the loss of priceless works of human genius; the statues of Praxiteles and Scopas burnt to make mortar; Greek dramas and Roman institutes erased to write over them patristic homilies; temples destroyed by Vandals, by Catholics, by Saracens, or Norman adventurers; mediæval cathedrals gutted by Anabaptists, Independents, and Protestant zealots generally. And what Protestant bigotry has spared, in our own day is